



WITHDRAWN Extlibris \*Collegii Alberti Alagni in Aovo Portu Aovae Angliae Gift of Mrs. Hendee





# MARY TODD LINCOLN

An Appreciation

## , BOOKS BY HONORE WILLSIE MORROW

#### Novels

THE HEART OF THE DESERT
STILL JIM
LYDIA OF THE PINES
THE FORBIDDEN TRAIL
THE ENCHANTED CANYON
JUDITH OF THE GODLESS VALLEY
THE EXILE OF THE LARIAT
THE DEVONSHERS
WE MUST MARCH
FOREVER FREE

#### Shorter Fiction

BENEFITS FORGOT
THE LOST SPEECH
of Abraham Lincoln

For Boys

On to OREGON!





MARY TODD LINCOLN

An early portrait

From the Frederick H. Meserve Collection

## MARY TODD LINCOLN

An Appreciation of the Wife of Abraham Lincoln

BY

HONORÉ WILLSIE MORROW





New York
WILLIAM MORROW & COMPANY
1 9 2 8

COPYRIGHT, 1928, BY
WILLIAM MORROW & COMPANY, INC.



923.173 L738<sub>m</sub>

## CONTENTS

CHAPT	ER					PAGH
I	THE MYSTERIOUS MRS. L	INCOLN			•	1
п	THE RAW MAKINGS					15
ш	LITTLE MARY TODD				•	57
IV	THE CRUCIBLE .		٠			73
V	WASHINGTON		•	•		87
vı	TAD LINCOLN'S SPI					103
VП	THE IRREPARABLE LOSS					143
VIII	THE UNGRACIOUS GIFT					171
TX	PEACE	• •		٠		195
SOME	POPULAR FALLACIES ABO	OUT LIN	COLN		٠	209

y .



## **ILLUSTRATIONS**

MA	RY I	CODD	LING	COLN	AN	EARI	Y POR	TRAIT	Fr	ontis	piece
											PAGE
							LINC				0.4
]	FIEL	он о	ME		•	•		•	•	•	24
тн	E LI	COL	N H	OME I	N SP	RING	FIELD	•	•		78
							coln'				
1	ном	E .	•	•	٠	٠	•	۰	•	•	84
"T.	AD"	LINC	OLN	•			٠	•		•	108
RO	BERT	TOI	D L	NCOL	N.	•	•	•	٠	•	108
MR	S. G	REEN	HOW	AND	HEE	DAT	GHTE	R.	•	•	140
MA	RY T	CODD	LING	COLN	٠	•	•	•	•	4	182
тн	E LI	NCOI	N F	AMILY	7 (P	AINTI	NG BY	CAR	PENT	ER)	220



THE MYSTERIOUS MRS. LINCOLN



Writing about Abraham Lincoln or about any of his family has become one of the most difficult tasks in the world of letters. In the first place it is practically impossible to write anything new about Lincoln himself. There is in existence a mass of Lincolniana; books, pamphlets, articles, clippings, excerpts, mementos, that mounts into thousands and tens of thousands of items.

These items all are well known to a group of several thousand persons in the United States who, with perhaps a touch of ponderosity, are styled or style themselves, Lincoln scholars. If one of the items privately owned is sold, everybody in the so-called scholar group hears of the sale. If one of the items is lost or stolen, or destroyed, the fact is news of importance to the group. The trading in Lincolniana between the Lincoln scholars on the one hand and the rare book dealers on the other mounts to no mean proportions every year from the money point of view alone.

As each new biography appears it is scanned,

### MARY TODD LINCOLN

microscopically, by all the scholar group and the unhappy author must stand ready to prove any divergence from the accepted Lincoln legend, or absolutely lose caste among the experts.

The research into Lincoln's life has long since, of course, reached the ridiculous degree. People quarrel bitterly over whether he spoke on January 10 at Moline or in Galesburg. Terrible literary enmities are founded on an improbability of language in an alleged verbatim quotation from the Emancipator. And perfectly good literary reputations are wrecked by amateurish fools who rush in and write about a Lincoln episode where only experts dare to tread.

It is highly probable that until the Lincoln papers which were left in escrow for almost another generation by Robert T. Lincoln, the oldest son of the Lincolns, are revealed to the public gaze, very few valuable new facts will be discovered about Abraham Lincoln. Any novelty in a new biography will be found only in the manner of its presentation, in the unique coloring given a literary production by the personality of the biographer.

It does look now as if it were the fictionist's turn with Lincoln. But even a fictionist must tremble who undertakes to write an historical novel on the Emancipator: the eyes of ten thousand experts are watching that fictionist with horrid suspicion and something not unlike contempt!

Now, I knew the "state of the art" when I undertook to write a novel about Lincoln. But as fools rush in, so did I. For I believed I had a picture to present of Lincoln that had not been presented before in fiction. Lincoln in the White House; Lincoln, the father of Bob, Willie and Tad; Lincoln, the husband of Mary Todd; Lincoln, the human being, during those four immortal years in Washington.

The formula for such a task was simple in outline, stupendous in detail, as I discovered after my plunge. One saturated oneself with all the Lincolniana that covered the period of the proposed novel. One made the material so intrinsic a part of one's imagination that after a few years of gestation it could come forth in fiction form, but fiction that presented an historically true picture. One set down the picture on paper, then retired to one's cyclone cellar while the experts caused winds to sweep and storms to rage!

However, there is this cheering thought: cheering at least to the author! If books were written

## MARY TODD LINCOLN

solely for the expert critic, they never would be written! And anyhow immediately I had begun to outline my novel I was so hectored with difficult problems of fact and construction, that I forgot all possible future contentions.

By far the greatest problem was to find material on Mary Todd Lincoln. It is an astounding thing to contemplate, the fact that Lincoln could grow to the god-like proportions he has attained in people's minds and so little be said about his wife.

To be sure there exists a very decided popular opinion to-day about Mrs. Lincoln. Ask the first American you meet "What kind of a woman was Lincoln's wife?" and the chances are ninetynine to one hundred that he'll reply that she was a shrew, a curse to her husband, a vulgar fool, insane. But one can't build an authentic characterization on gossip although, at first, it looked as if there was little else to be found about Mary Todd Lincoln. There had been no life written of her. There had been but one article written about her that I could find. One could get to know her only by gathering a sentence here and a paragraph there in contemporary diaries, in the few of her letters accessible and in the few pages devoted to her in one or two biographies of her husband. And there was Elizabeth Keckley's book, which I will describe later.

Most of the biographers appear to have grudged her even a thought. Nicolay and Hay, Lincoln's private secretaries during the White House period, barely mention Mary Lincoln in their ten volumes. William Stoddard, another of Lincoln's secretaries, mentions her several times but casually, with no intent to describe her. The diaries and autobiographies of the various cabinet members, politicians, preachers, newspaper men, and plain citizens who knew the Lincolns more or less intimately, pass Mary Lincoln off as casually as they do the children. The Encyclopædia Britannica is monumentally unhelpful. For weal or woe, the wife of any great man who lived with him for twenty-three years, deserves more than this:

"Lincoln married on the 4th of November, 1843, Mary Todd (1818-1882), also a native of Kentucky, who bore him four sons of whom the only one to grow up was the oldest."

As I searched on and on it began to look as if there were a conspiracy of silence about Lincoln's wife. She had the reputation, I gathered, of having a bitter tongue. Did she say such dreadful things that people thought it best to leave her story untold? For a long time I thought that this was the reason for the mystery.

Then I observed an interesting fact. The wives of none of the great men of that period were written about. They were just wives and that was all, in the eyes of the biographers. William Seward was the Secretary of State, a very famous and influential man, with an extraordinarily colorful personality. Mrs. Seward, I gathered from a letter I found written by a friend of hers at the time of her death, was a remarkable human being who had had a profound influence on her husband's career. Seward's biographers utterly neglect her.

I learned from contemporary letters that Mrs. Welles, wife of Gideon Welles, the Secretary of the Navy, was a person of importance in Washington during the Civil War. But not Gideon nor any other writer I could find gives her the compliment of ten lines together. Mrs. Charles Eames, Charles Francis Adams notes in his diary, "had the salon of Washington" of that day. Here he went when he wished to meet great men of the period in brilliant and informal discussion. William Russell, the famous British war correspondent, made the same statement about Mrs. Eames in his diary. Charles Sumner

found her a brilliant intellectual companion and deferred to her opinions as did many other powerful men of that time. None of these men in their books give her more mention than they would to the keeper of an inn.

And so one might go on for pages. Viewed from this angle, then, the silence about Mary Lincoln seems less a personal and more a general and customary conspiracy. It wasn't done. One didn't talk about their wives in writing men's histories.

And still this explanation didn't wholly satisfy me. There were still contemporary newspapers. And these said cruel things about Mary Lincoln. And there was Herndon. William H. Herndon was Lincoln's law partner in Springfield. He published in 1888 a two-volume life of Lincoln that was long considered authoritative. The portion concerning Lincoln's wife still is accepted as full truth, mostly because no one has looked into the matter. Herndon is the grand exception to the rule pertaining to silence about wives. He talks about Mary Lincoln over several pages, and in so doing achieves a peculiar distinction. He was the biographer who fixed Lincoln's wife in history as a shrew. Something to be proud of, that! Robert Todd

### MARY TODD LINCOLN

Lincoln, oldest son of Abraham and Mary, was so outraged by Herndon's book that he bought up and destroyed all he could find of the early edition. Herndon's vindictive tone was disgusting. Nevertheless, he had to have his place in the characterization I was attempting to make: an attempt that was now assuming the proportions of a real hunt, a sincere and arduous attempt to lift the unpleasant veil which I was beginning to suspect obscured the character of a fascinating woman.

In the course of time, my Mary Todd Lincoln note book achieved a very respectable bulk. I had accumulated with my sentence, paragraph and occasional page collecting, a haphazard mass of about fifty thousand words, a heterogeneous compilation that would require long labor to sweat into the image of a living, breathing woman. My method was first to sort out all the material into time sequence and then to translate it into my own vernacular. This resulted in a rough and ragged sort of biographical account of Mrs. Lincoln with rather a surprising amount of detail-not my own detail, but that of the many people who in the long ago had passed comment or told tales on Abraham Lincoln's wife.

This was more than ever had been done before with Mary Lincoln, but at that, the account refused to produce a true image in my mind. wrote it through again, turning some of the episodes into dialogue, giving Mary a vocabulary which I drew from her own letters. This was better. I added some descriptions of Lexington, her birthplace, which I found in old histories of Kentucky. I made some "miniatures" of her children, based on authentic material. I took some of the episodes out of the past tense and put them into the present. I wrote in several descriptions of the White House. I took several of the White House events, to which history had given but a few paragraphs, and made them into narratives of several thousand words' length, authentic as to plot and events but fictionized as to conversations and continuity. Such a narrative was the story of Tad's spy. Tad ran away with the story and yet it made his mother curiously vivid in my mind.

And now having once more copied my material out, I found myself with an irregular sort of life story, some portions in low and some in high relief, some portions fictionized and some in the raw: as a piece of artistry, decidedly blundering but—it gave birth to Mary Lincoln for

me. I saw her as clearly as I saw my own sister and so was ready to discard my abortive biography and write Lincoln's wife into the novel, praying to heaven that I could now picture her as I saw her.

It was at about this point that I mentioned to a magazine editor the fact that I had discovered Mary Todd Lincoln to be one of the most lied about women in the world and that I had developed for her, besides pity, an ardent admiration and affection. He evidently thought me mildly insane but—having an editor's proper curiosity—he asked for proof. So I put into his hands my refutation of the gossip which he too had recited to me glibly. He read the material, felt that I had made my point and published it in his magazine.

Upon its appearance, a good many people wrote to me concerning it. Some of them told me I was a fool and didn't know what I was talking about. But a relative of Mary Todd Lincoln took some of the sting out of that accusation by writing me that this was "a true portrait of that long-suffering and noble woman; the first time that justice had been done to Abraham Lincoln's wife." This, I'll admit, set me up, considerably.

There were many others, however, who neither blamed nor praised but asked me how and where I had found my material. And these queries came not so much from the experts, who, of course, were familiar with my sources, as from the average men and women who are keenly interested in the Lincolns but haven't time or opportunity to get back to sources themselves, though they find source material very interesting. Their queries were extremely numerous, so numerous that I gave up trying to give individual replies. Instead, I've made this somewhat long-drawn-out explanation and have embodied it, with the little rough-and-ready biography, in this book.

I've done this with two purposes in view: one, as a short cut to letter answering!—the other, because I want to pay a tribute to Mary Todd Lincoln. I want to do it directly, as I cannot in a novel. I am firmly convinced that without the influence and inspiration of Mary Todd Lincoln, the world never would have known Abraham Lincoln, for he never would have reached the White House without her. And when I say this, I realize that you who read these words, as well as the editor aforementioned, will demand what the man from Missouri demanded. So herewith is my showing!



THE RAW MAKINGS



In this chapter is some of the source material which I have taken from my note book. It is the verbatim matter from which I arranged the biographical sequence. The first episode of all is one given me by my mother.

Her father was a New Englander, an ardent abolitionist who had a good deal to do with the underground railway. In 1861, a man from Lexington, Kentucky, called on grandfather, full of indignation and with vows of vengeance. He was on the trail of some runaway slaves and for reasons not cogent here was holding grandfather responsible for their escape to Canada. My mother remembered, though she was a very little girl, the terrific argument in the parlor. She remembered also that after the loud voices ceased, the Kentuckian remained very amicably to partake of Saturday night beans and brown bread and that he told many stories of the Lincolns.

These stories, because most of them treated Lincoln as poor white trash, were used for many years by grandfather to cast aspersion on the

intelligence of the Southern Democrat. They were based on bitter hearsay and were worthless. But the picture of little Mary Todd, told with amused liking and with pity because the Southerner felt she had ruined her life by marrying a Republican, hore the motive and ring of truth. Mary Todd had gone to school with our Rebel's sister. He recalled Mary as a peppery, sparkling child, witty and generous. She had dressed up one day, he said, in her mother's dress, to run off to the Derby races. Her father had caught her and sent her to her room, where she promptly had burned the dress. The next day, she punished herself by swapping clothes with a poor white. Robert Todd was peppery himself, a handsome, dressy fellow. Todds, a fine family but all of 'em had a queer streak for generations. Mary showed it by marrying that fellow Lincoln. White trash. Family would never really forgive her for it. Mary well educated, French and all that. Todds great entertainers and politicians. She'd pushed and shoved her clodhopper into Washington. He'd break her heart yet . . . So much for Mary Todd, via New England.

From Herndon's Lincoln, we got the first suc-

## THE RAW MAKINGS

cinct statement of Mary's genealogy, as well as several other contributions, less happy.

"The paternal grandfather of Mary Todd. General Levi Todd, was born in 1756, was educated in Virginia and studied law in the office of General Lewis of that State. He emigrated to Kentucky, was a lieutenant in the campaigns, conducted by General George Rogers Clark against the Indians, and commanded a battalion in the battle of Blue Licks, August 18, 1782, where his brother, John Todd, was killed. He succeeded Daniel Boone in the command of the militia, ranking as major general, and was one of the first settlers in Lexington, Ky. February 25, 1779, he married Miss Jane Briggs. The seventh child of this union, born February 25, 1791, was Robert S. Todd, the father of Mrs. Lincoln.

"On her maternal side Mrs. Lincoln was highly connected. Her great-grandfather, General Andrew Porter, was in the war of the Revolution. He succeeded Peter Muhlenberg as major general of the Pennsylvania militia. Her great uncles, George B. Porter, who was Governor of Michigan, James Madison Porter, secretary of the navy under President Tyler, and

David R. Porter, governor of Pennsylvania, were men of ability and distinction. Her mother, Anne Eliza Parker, was a cousin of her father, Robert S. Todd. The latter had served in both houses of the Kentucky legislature and for over twenty years was President of the Bank of Kentucky at Lexington. He died July 16, 1849.

"Mary Todd . . . was born in Lexington, Kentucky, December 13, 1818. 'My mother,' related Mrs. Lincoln to me in 1865, 'died when I was still young. I was educated by Madame Mantelli, a lady who lived opposite Mr. Clay's and who was an accomplished French scholar. Our conversation in school was carried on entirely in French—in fact, we were allowed to speak nothing else. I finished my education at Mrs. Ward's Academy, an institution to which many people from the North sent their daughters.'

"When Mary Todd came to her sister's house in Springfield in 1839, she was in her twentyfirst year. She was a young woman of strong, passionate nature and quick temper and she left her home in Kentucky to avoid living under the same roof with a step-mother. . . . She was of average height, weighing when I first saw her

## THE RAW MAKINGS

about a hundred and thirty pounds. She was rather compactly built, had a well rounded face and rich dark-brown hair and bluish-gray eyes. In her bearing she was proud, but handsome and vivacious. . . .

"When she used a pen, its point was sure to be sharp and she wrote with wit and ability. She not only had a quick intellect but an intuitive judgment of men and their motives. (She disliked and distrusted Herndon! H. W. M.) Ordinarily she was affable and even charming in her manners: but when offended or antagonized, her agreeable qualities instantly disappeared beneath a wave of stinging satire or sarcastic bitterness and her entire better nature was submerged. . . . Lincoln was charmed with her wit and beauty no less than by her excellent social qualities and profound knowledge of the strong and weak in individual characters. . . . After his marriage, it cannot be said that he liked the society of ladies . . . Lincoln had none of the tender ways that please a woman, and he could not it seems by any positive act of his own make her happy. If his wife was happy, she was naturally happy or made herself so in spite of countless drawbacks. He was, however, a good husband in his own peculiar way and in his own way

only. . . . That a lady as proud and as ambitious to exercise the rights of social supremacy as Mary Todd should repent of her marriage to the man I have just described need occasion no surprise in the mind of any one. Both she and the man whose hand she accepted acted along the line of human conduct, and both reaped the bitter harvest of conjugal infelicity. . . . One of her (Mrs. Lincoln's) great misfortunes was her inability to control her temper. Admit that and everything can be explained. However cold and abstracted her husband may have appeared to others, however impressive when roused may have been his indignation in public, he never gave vent to his feelings at home. He always meekly accepted as final the authority of his wife in all matters of domestic concern.

"This may explain somewhat the statement of Judge Davis that 'as a general rule when all the lawyers of a Saturday evening would go home and see their families and friends, Lincoln would find some excuse and refuse to go. We said nothing but it seemed to us all he was not domestically happy.'

"He exercised no government of any kind over his household—want of social polish on the part of Mrs. Lincoln gave great offense and

therefore in commenting on it she cared neither for time nor for place. Her frequent outbursts of temper precipitated many an embarrassment from which Lincoln with great difficulty extricated himself."

Herndon goes on at some length to picture Lincoln "abstracting" himself from home and sitting in his office in agony of mind or as trying to forget his troubles in swapping yarns with his fellow townsmen in some village store. But at this point he inserts a paragraph that would seem to invalidate himself as a witness concerning Lincoln's state of mind with regard to Mary.

"Mr. Lincoln never had a confidant, and therefore never unbosomed himself to others. He never spoke of his trials to me or, so far as I knew, to any one else. It was a great burden to carry, but he bore it sadly enough and without

a murmur."

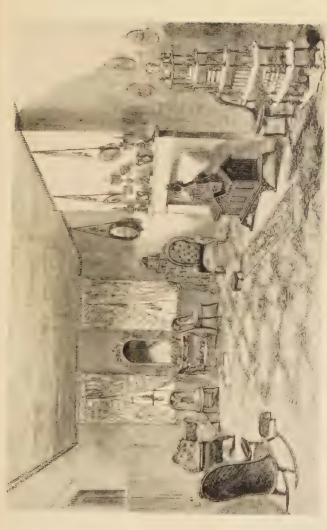
And with this paragraph Herndon established the popular conception of Lincoln, the husband.

As a contrast to Herndon's picture, here is Rankin's. Henry B. Rankin as a youth under twenty took up the study of law in the office of Lincoln and Herndon. This was in 1856. Rankin's mother had been a teacher of Anne Rutledge, Lincoln's first sweetheart, and had known

Lincoln well from boyhood to manhood. Young Rankin became a great admirer of Mary Lincoln and was a welcome and frequent visitor at the Lincolns' Springfield home. To him she told, with inimitable wit, the story of Douglas' and Lincoln's rival courtship to her. She denied to him Herndon's tales of Lincoln as the cowardly and clown-like lover. She helped the young man in his study of French. He tells of carrying to her one of Victor Hugo's orations which had appeared in a Paris journal and of her translating it for him with delightful sympathy and skill.

"Mrs. Lincoln was always an inspiration and sometimes a prodding one to her husband's ambition because of her personal belief that high national preferment awaited him politically, if she with others could only keep him steadily aspiring thereto. More than most men of his exceptional ability, Lincoln needed this prod. For this service there is a large and as yet unrecognized debt of gratitude due from the American public to Mary Todd Lincoln. . . .

"Her husband and she were alike in one particular. Having once met and conversed with either, one would never forget the impression made on one. Neither was of a conventional



FRONT PARLOR IN ABRAHAM LINCOLN'S HOUSE, SPRINGFIELD, ILLINOIS Original (about 1860) in Illinois State Historical Library Collection



type. . . . She thought quickly, spoke rapidly and the expression of her face was always in harmony with her words. Without intending to wound, she sometimes indulged in sarcastic or witty remarks. At times of deep feeling her words might bring keen pain to persons toward whom she felt kindly. . . . Always and everywhere she showed her refinement and dignity of character entirely free from affectation. . . . Those who were close to her or who had not found her pliant to their wishes might greatly misjudge Mrs. Lincoln. If not her friend, it required sometimes an effort not to be her critic or with those having similar impulsive peculiarities, her enemy. This was the sad and unfortunate relation between her and Mr. Herndon; he being markedly similar to her in his impulsive antagonisms and equally unforgiving. They began their acquaintance wrong and they maintained that attitude ever after so consistently that neither could see the sterling qualities of the other."

Rankin speaks at length of Mary's excellent and accurate literary taste, for which she was well known in Springfield. "By her brilliancy of conversation and her appreciation of all that was best in literature and in the books which

# MARY TODD LINCOLN

they mutually enjoyed in their home she was a forceful stimulus to Lincoln's intellectual life. . . . I saw Mr. and Mrs. Lincoln in many wide and differing situations during their married life at their home; saw them leaving home; saw them when calling at the law office, during busy hours in hurried consultation with each other on family, social or business affairs, saw them in their carriage together—saw them regularly attending church together-I saw them often in crowded assemblies of all sorts and conditions of public affairs, often again in both pleasant and trying circumstances with their children. . . . In none of these situations did I ever detect in Mrs. Lincoln aught but the most wifely and matronly proprieties and respect toward her husband, her family, and her friends."

"There were moods of inner solitude into which Lincoln sometimes lapsed, when his silences were mysterious to all his friends. . . . None should be so rash and unjust as to interpret them as shadows cast by Mrs. Lincoln over his married life. That would be false and more than cruel. They were characteristic of him long before he met her; they remained inseparable from his remarkable personality all his life. Mrs. Lincoln, on the contrary, so far from being

a cause of this mood, was his greatest solace in these inner solitudes. Her sprightliness of spirit, her keenness of wit, the brightness of her versatile mind, lit up many times—as I personally know—the gloom and self-centered moodiness of his spells of melancholy. . . . She of all near him was the only one who had the skill and tact to shorten their duration; the only one privileged to attempt it. I revere her memory as much for this most gracious service as I do for others that speak more loudly.

"She was the animating cause, I am glad to say, of his absence on tours out in the Eighth District to extend his law practice and help swell their slim finances as well as promote his political influence by more extensive acquaintance. But his going on these trips was not to escape his home, as some historians have intimated. That was a cruel, bitter, false charge. His wife was at home attending to its every interest and discharging faithfully, willingly, gladly every duty that Lincoln's absence added to her usual cares. . . . She was more aggressively ambitious than her husband. She steadfastly inspired and kept him aiming higher. . . . She was the managing partner who kept the expense accounts within the limits which their

moderate income placed at her disposal. . . . Only the limited few knew the intense spirit of her who remained at home to inspire his going forth, to welcome his return, to stimulate him to renew the struggle when disappointment had to be met. . . . Until 1858, he needed influences outside himself to push him to the political front and hold him there. She gave him this unstintingly. Some misunderstood, regarding her officious in this and said cruel, hard things about her for it. This annoyed her greatly and her replies were equally stinging, creating lifelong enemies. . . . She had a spirit that never tired in the battle line. She was less pleasant on a retreat and could stand almost anything better than a political dead calm. Lincoln could be at entire ease on the retreat or in a calm, for then he went into one of his moods of meditative silence that was at such times exasperatingly unintelligible to her and to so many of his friends. To whom would this mood not have been a trial! Yet she always found a way of getting him out of it and back in the firing line again."

Rankin then goes on to pay fine tribute to Herndon's fidelity and efficient service as Lincoln's law partner. But he then renders judgment on him as a biographer.

"By temperament, by local prejudices and social antagonisms of long standing in Springfield; by the effect of early habits, overcome while he was a partner of Lincoln but resumed after 1870, and with the unfortunate effects of a use of morphine . . . Herndon was rendered less competent to write a satisfactory biography of Lincoln . . ."

Among the very few defenders of Mary Lincoln is her sister, Mrs. Emily Todd Helm, who wrote a short article about Lincoln's wife in McClure's Magazine, 1898.

"She was certainly very pretty and singularly sensitive. She was impulsive too and made no attempt to conceal her feelings. Indeed this would have been impossible for her face was an index of every passing emotion. . . . She was full of humor but never unrefined. . . . She was extremely spirited and her candor of speech and independence of thought often gave offense where none was intended, for a more affectionate heart never beat. . . . It has been said that Mr. and Mrs. Lincoln were unhappy. Mrs. Wallace (Mary's sister) denies this emphatically and the present writer's knowledge bears that out. They understood each other thoroughly and Mr. Lincoln looked beyond the impulsive words and

## MARY TODD LINCOLN

manners and knew that his wife was devoted to him and his interests. . . . The present writer saw Mr. and Mrs. Lincoln together some part of each day for six months and saw nothing of the unhappiness so often referred to. She was a cheerful woman, a delightful conversationalist and well informed on all the subjects of the day."

Mrs. Helm appended some letters from Mary which I found very suggestive. Here are two of them:

"Springfield, Ill., Sept. 20, 1857.—The summer has strangely and rapidly passed away. Some portion of it was spent most pleasantly traveling in the East. We visited Niagara, Canada, New York and other points of interest. When I saw the large steamers at the New York landing ready for their European voyage, I felt in my heart inclined to sigh that poverty was my portion. I often laugh and tell Mr. Lincoln that my next husband shall be rich."

"Springfield, Feb. 16, 1857.—Within the past three weeks there has been a party almost every night and some two or three grand fêtes are coming off this week. I may surprise you when I tell you that I am recovering from the slight fatigue of a large and I believe very handsome and

agreeable entertainment. At least our friends flatter us by saying so. About five hundred were invited; yet owing to an unlucky rain only three hundred favored us by their presence. . . . And the same evening, in Jacksonville, Col. Warren gave a bridal party to his son which occasion robbed us of some of our friends. You will think we have enlarged our borders since you were here."

William Stoddard, one of Lincoln's three personal secretaries, wrote thus in his diary in 1862: "Mrs. Lincoln was never less than a somewhat authoritative ruler of her own affairs but it is entirely easy for all that to meet her with the most positive and strenuous negatives. She is always ready to listen to argument and to yield to plainly put reasons for doing or for not doing, provided the arguments come from a recognized friend, for her personal antipathies are quick and strong and at times they find hasty and resentful forms of expression. . . .

"It was not easy at first to understand how a lady who could one day be so kindly, so considerate, so hopeful, could upon another day appear so unreasonable, so irritable, so despondent, so even niggardly. . . . Probably all middle-aged people and physicians will understand better than a youthful secretary the causes of a sudden horror of poverty to come, for example, which during a few hours of extreme depression proposed to sell off even the manure in the Executive stables and to cut off the necessary expenses of the household. No demand for undue economies and no unhappiness of disposition could be discovered a week or so later. People in great need of something spicy to write or talk about are picking up all sorts of stray gossip related to asserted occurrences under this roof and they are making strange work of it. It is a work they will not cease from. . . .

"Mrs. Lincoln is waiting in the Red Room and she is bright, cheerful, almost merry. Her instructions are given in a very kindly and vivacious manner. As you look at her and talk with her the fact that she has so many enemies strikes you as one of the moral curiosities of this venomous time for she never in any way has harmed one of the men or women who are so recklessly assailing her. . . .

"Mrs. Lincoln is not going out to the fortifications to-day; only to the hospitals. She rarely takes outside company with her on these errands and she thereby loses opportunities. If she were worldly wise she would carry newspaper correspondents from two to five, both sexes, every time she went and she would have them take shorthand notes of what she says to sick soldiers and of what the sick soldiers say to her. Then she would bring them back to the White House and give them some cake and coffee as a rule and show them the Conservatory. By keeping up such a process until every correspondent that Colonel Baker can find for her has been dealt with say twice, she could find something that would sweeten the contents of many journals and of the secretaries' waste-baskets. The directly opposite course as she has pursued it has not by any means worked well. . . .

"It is a little early in the season for Mrs. Lincoln's Red Room receptions to begin but she has good reasons for the announcements she has sent out. She is entirely willing to do her duty and to sit through the evening in her parlor while her smiling guests pull her in pieces and she says so, cheerfully, as you chat with her and receive her instructions. . . . The tall, gray-haired, severe-faced lady from Boston in very plain black has two sons in the army. Her dark eyes search her (Mrs. Lincoln's) crimson silk remorselessly in spite of the warm, hearty cordiality of her greeting. Every woman who has yet arrived has

come as a critic and not one of them will be capable of doing kindly justice; and they will be authorities, hereafter, swelling a miserable tide of misunderstanding. . . . These women, queens of society in their own parishes, should have perceptive faculties capable of telling them that Mrs. Lincoln is doing the honors of the White House remarkably well. Not one woman in a hundred could do better. But these women . . . consider themselves each as one in a thousand with nine hundred and ninety-nine ranged below her. So they will show no mercy. . . .

"Lincoln's very family were attacked in public and in private by the most vile and cowardly calumny. Not a few bitter tongues roundly asserted that Mrs. Lincoln herself was in constant correspondence as a spy with the chiefs of the Rebellion. Through her they obtained the secrets of the Cabinet and the plans of the generals in the field. The insanity of the accusation does not seem to have been considered. It was equally unimportant though strictly true that she refused to open her own private letters and insisted that all that came to her should be opened first by one of the President's private secretaries. . . ."

So much for the young man William Stod-

dard, who became a distinguished writer and historian. Follow one of Lincoln's letters and a telegram of the White House period which certainly give no evidence of the domestic infelicity and lack of understanding so constantly attributed to the Lincolns:

"Executive Mansion, Washington, August 8, 1863. My dear Wife: All well as usual and no particular troubles anyway. I put the money into the Treasury at five per cent., with the privilege of withdrawing it at any time upon thirty days' notice. I suppose you are glad to know this. Tell dear Tad poor 'Nanny Goat' is lost and Mrs. Cuthburt and I are in distress about it. The day you left, Nanny was found resting herself and chewing her little cud in the middle of Tad's bed; but now she's gone. The gardener kept complaining that she destroyed the flowers till it was concluded to bring her down to the White House. This was done and the second day she had disappeared and has not been heard of since. This is the last we know of poor 'Nanny.' The weather continues dry and excessively warm here. The election in Kentucky has gone very strongly right. Old Mr. Wickliffe got ugly as you know; ran for governor and is terribly beaten. Upon Mr. Crittenden's death,

Brutus Clay, Cassius' brother, was put on the track for Congress and is largely elected. Mr. Menzies, who, as we thought, behaved very badly is largely beaten in the district opposite Cincinnati by Green Clay Smith, Cassius Clay's nephew. But enough. Affectionately, A. Lincoln."

"Telegram. War Department, Sept. 24, 1863. Mrs. A. Lincoln, Fifth Ave. Hotel, New York: We now have a tolerably accurate summing up of the late battle between Rosecrans and Bragg. The result is that we are worsted if at all only in the fact that we, after the main fighting was over, yielded the ground, thus leaving considerable of our artillery and wounded to fall into the enemy's hands for which we got nothing in return. We lost in officers, one killed and three or four wounded, all brigadiers, while according to the rebel account which we have, they lost six killed and eight wounded. Of the killed, one major-general and five brigadiers, including your brother-in-law, Helm, and of the wounded three major-generals and five brigadiers. This last may be reduced two in number by corrections of confusion in names. At 11:40 A.M. yesterday General Rosecrans telegraphed from Chattanooga: 'We hold this point and I

cannot be dislodged except by very superior number and after a great battle.' A dispatch leaving there yesterday, after night, says 'No fight to-day.' A. Lincoln."

It was my rare book dealer who routed out Lizzie Keckley for me. Who was Lizzie Keckley? We'll let the title of her book, published in 1868, answer that query: "Behind the Scenes by Elizabeth Keckley, formerly a slave but more recently modiste and friend to Mrs. Abraham Lincoln, or, Thirty Years a Slave and Four Years in the White House." It required several weeks of advertising by the dealer to locate Lizzie, but finally she turned up, in a faded green cloth binding, and with water- and time-stained pages.

The book has little value save to that rare individual who may be looking for light on the character of Mary Lincoln. Mrs. Keckley was evidently a woman of fair intelligence. She saw a good deal of the President's wife, not only because she sewed for her but because she acted frequently as her personal maid. She developed a strong affection for Mrs. Lincoln and tried to give an adequate picture of her as she saw her. But the modiste was badly handicapped by lack of literary ability and by that inherent inability

of the white and the negro to appraise each other accurately. She had, however, spent her slave life among decently bred Southerners and among her patrons in Washington were many distinguished social figures. She was well qualified to judge of Mrs. Lincoln's social ability.

After she had dressed Mrs. Lincoln for the first time for a levee, she wrote: "Mrs. Lincoln took the President's arm and with smiling face led the train below. I was surprised at her grace and composure. I had heard so much in current and malicious report of her low life, of her ignorance and vulgarity that I expected to see her embarrassed on this occasion. Report I saw was wrong. No queen accustomed to the usages of royalty all her life could have comported herself with more calmness and dignity than did the wife of the President."

Willie, the twelve-year-old son, died in February, 1862 and Lizzie Keckley helped to "wash and lay him out. Mrs. Lincoln's grief was inconsolable. The pale face of her dead boy threw her into convulsions. . . . Willie, she often said, if spared by Providence would be the hope and stay of her old age. But Providence had not spared him. . . . She was so completely overwhelmed that she did not attend the funeral.

went to the battlefield with the three months men and was killed in Missouri. . . . It was a sad blow to me and the kindly, womanly letter that Mrs. Lincoln wrote me when she heard of my bereavement was full of golden comfort. . . . After Willie's death she never crossed the threshold of the Guest Room in which he died or the Green Room in which he was embalmed.

"Mrs. Lincoln's love for her husband sometimes prompted her to act very strangely. She was extremely jealous of him and if a lady desired to court her displeasure she could select no surer way to do it than to show marked attention."

tion to the President.

"Often Mr. and Mrs. Lincoln discussed the relations of the Cabinet officers and gentlemen prominent in politics in my presence. . . . She was well versed in human character, was somewhat suspicious of those by whom she was surrounded and often her judgment was correct."—Her hostility to Mr. Chase was very bitter. She claimed that he was a selfish politician instead of a true patriot. When Andrew Johnson was urged for military Governor of Tennessee, Mrs. Lincoln bitterly opposed the appointment. "He is a demagogue," she said almost fiercely, "and

if you place him in power, Mr. Lincoln, you will rue it one day."

Of McClellan when he was first placed in power, Mrs. Lincoln said to her husband, "He's a humbug. He talks so much and does so little. If I had the power, I'd soon take his head off and have some energetic man in his place."

Of Grant, she insisted to Lincoln, "He's a butcher. He loses two men to the enemy's one. He has no regard for human life. I could fight an enemy as well, myself. According to his tactics, there is nothing to do but march a new line of men up in front of the breastworks, to be shot down as fast as they take their places and keep marching till the enemy grows tired of the slaughter."

F. B. Carpenter, who spent six months at the White House while painting his famous picture of the signing of the Emancipation Proclamation, wrote a short book about his experiences. He gives some casual but illuminating mention of Mary.

"The second week in July the whole country, and Washington in particular, was thrown into a fever of anxiety by the rebel raid upon that city under Early and Breckinridge. The night of Sunday, the 10th, I have always believed the

city might have been captured had the enemy followed up his advantage.

"The defences were weak and there were comparatively but few troops in the city or vicinity. All day Monday, the excitement was at the highest pitch. At the White House, the canonading at Fort Stevens was distinctly heard throughout the day. During Sunday, Monday and Tuesday, the President visited the forts and outworks, part of the time accompanied by Mrs. Lincoln. While at Fort Stevens on Monday, both were imprudently exposed,—rifle balls coming, in several instances, alarmingly near!

"... Subsequently, the rebel force returned to Richmond, almost unharmed. I saw no one who appeared to take this more to heart than Mrs. Lincoln, who was inclined to lay the responsibility at the door of the Secretary of War.

"Two or three weeks later, when tranquillity was perfectly restored, it was said that Stanton called upon the President and Mrs. Lincoln, one evening at the 'Soldiers Home.' In the course of conversation, the Secretary said, playfully, 'Mrs. Lincoln, I intend to have a full length portrait of you painted, standing on the ramparts at Fort Stevens overlooking the field.'

"'That is very well,' returned Mrs. Lincoln,

### MARY TODD LINCOLN

very promptly, 'and I can assure you of one thing, Mr. Secretary, if I had had a few *ladies* with me the Rebels would not have been permitted to get away as they did!' "

The Secretary of War gives in a guarded paragraph an episode that could be made into a book.

"April 29, 1864, Friday. . . . The President to-day related to two or three of us the circumstances connected with his giving a pass to the half-sister of his wife, Mrs. White. He gave the details with frankness and without disguise. I will not go into them all, although they do him credit on a matter of scandal and abuse. The papers have assailed him for giving a pass to Mrs. White to carry merchandise. Briefly, Mrs. W. called at the White House and sent in her card to Mrs. Lincoln, her sister, who declined to receive or see her. Mrs. W. two or three times repeated these applications to Mrs. L. and the President, with the same result. The President sent her a pass such as in some cases he has given, for her to proceed South. She sent it back with a request that she might take trunks without being examined. The President refused. She then showed her pass and talked 'secesh' at the hotel and made application

through Mallory first and then Brutus Clay. The President refused the former and told Brutus that if Mrs. W. did not leave forthwith, she might expect to find herself within twenty-four hours in the Old Capitol Prison."

Charles Francis Adams, son of the man Lincoln made our Ambassador to Great Britain, was scarcely twenty when he attended Lincoln's first inauguration. He describes these ceremonies in his diary and tells of some of the social functions that also took place that day. Charles Sumner dined with the Adams family at mid-afternoon. Sumner did not know Mary Lincoln at this time but he contributed his bit of gossip.

"He told us that Mrs. Lincoln wanted to make a Collector of the Port of Boston on account of her son 'Bobby'—how the western barbarians had invaded the White House and Mr. Lincoln was meddling with every office in the gift of the Executive. . . That evening I went to the reception at Mrs. Eames'. If the President caught it at dinner, his wife caught it at the reception. All manner of stories about her were flying around; she wanted to do the right thing but not knowing how, was too weak and proud to ask; she was going to put the White

House on an economical basis and to that end was about to dismiss the 'help,' as she called the servants, some of whom it was asserted had already left because 'they must live with gentlefolk'; she had got hold of newspaper reporters and railroad conductors as the best persons to go to for advice and direction . . ."

William Russell, correspondent of the London *Times*, published the diary he kept in this country in 1861-2 under the title, "My diary North and South." Here are some of his comments.

He dined with the Lincolns at their first State dinner.

"March 28, 1861—Mrs. Lincoln struck me as desirous of making herself agreeable; and I own I was agreeably disappointed as the Secessionist ladies at Washington had been amusing themselves by anecdotes which could scarcely have been founded on fact. . . .

"March 30.—On returning to the hotel I found a magnificent bouquet with a card attached to them with Mrs. Lincoln's compliments and another card announcing that she had a 'reception' at three o'clock. It was rather late before I got to the White House and there were only two or three ladies in the drawing-room

when I arrived. I was informed afterward that the attendance was very scanty. The Washington ladies have not yet made up their minds that Mrs. Lincoln is the fashion. They miss their Southern friends and constantly draw comparisons between them and the vulgar Yankee men and women now in power. I do not know enough to say if the affectation of superiority be justified; but assuredly if New York be Yankee there is nothing in it which does not far surpass

this preposterous capital.

"The impression of homeliness produced by Mrs. Lincoln on first sight is not diminished by closer acquaintance. Few women not to the manner born there are whose heads would not be disordered and circulation disturbed by a rapid transition, almost instantaneous, from a condition of obscurity in a country town to be mistress of the White House. Her smiles and frowns become a matter of consequence to the whole American world. As the wife of the country lawyer or even of the Congressman her movements were of no consequence. The journals of Springfield would not have wasted a single line on her. Now, if she but drive down Pennsylvania Avenue, the electric wire thrills the news to every hamlet in the Union; and fortunate is

the correspondent who in a special despatch can give authentic particulars of her destination and her dress. The lady is surrounded by flatterers and intriguers seeking her influence or such places as she can give."

Charles Sumner, Senator from Massachusetts and constant visitor at the White House while the Lincolns were there, made many references to Mary in his letters. He found her a "lady, kindly, refined and of intellectual tastes." It was Sumner who put up the superb fight in Congress to obtain a pension for Mary after the assassination. The details of that fight in the Congressional Records make the most poignant contribution of all to Mary Todd's history. One or two letters in Sumner's unpublished collection give an interesting angle on their friendship.

"Executive Mansion
"Tuesday morning, March 28, 1864.
"Hon. Charles Sumner.

"My dear Sir: Words are scarcely an atonement for the inadvertent manner in which I addressed you on yesterday. Therefore, I pray you, accept this little peace offering for your table: a few fresh flowers brought up by the gardener. I am aware that you do not usually

frequent large crowds or attend receptions. They are certainly somewhat of an annoyance but a necessity which of course in this house cannot be dispensed with. Yet in reference to your special attendance my words were mere badinage. We have no good news from that brave youth, Col. Dahlgren. Fears are now entertained that he is certainly killed. Trusting that your kind nature will excuse me, I remain, respectfully, Mary Lincoln."

"Executive Mansion,
"Sunday, March 19, 1865.

"Senator Sumner,

"My dear Sir: Whilst appointments are being made and vacancies filled, I trust you will not deem me intrusive by suggesting your quiet perseverance and that of your influential friends in the claim of Mr. J. Jay. Our good friend, Baron Gerolt, called to see me yesterday and proposed bringing the new Austrian Minister to pay his respects this evening. Hoping the charming music in 'Faust' compensated you for the two or three hours passed away from your studies, which in Mr. Lincoln's case I never regret, I remain, very truly, Mary Lincoln."

### MARY TODD LINCOLN

"Executive Mansion, March 23, 1865. "Senator Sumner,

"My dear Sir: The President and myself are about leaving for 'City Point' and I cannot but devoutly hope that change of air and rest may have a beneficial effect on my good Husband's health. On our return, about Wednesday, we hope you will be inclined to accompany us to the Italian Opera. 'Ernani' is set aside for that evening. Perhaps we will have a large private box and some one or two other agreeable friends will join us.

"From the 'State Department' yesterday, Mr. Lincoln received Louis Napoleon's recent work, the Life of Julius Cæsar. It has been sent in pamphlet form and is to be bound. When it has been returned to us, if you will allow us the liberty of sending it to you to read, you will doubtless be interested in it. In the coming summer, when we shall be left to our solitude I shall peruse it myself for I have so sadly neglected the little French I fancied so familiar to me.

"Judge Haines called last evening to say farewell. He has been so kind a friend that I am quite as attached to him as if he were a relative. Very truly, Mary Lincoln.

"Please excuse this very hasty note, M. L."

A short account by Elizabeth Todd Grimsley, who spent six months in the White House with the Lincolns, was recently (1927) published in a Journal of the Illinois State Historical Society. Mrs. Grimsley was Mary's cousin. The diary contains a few comments on Mary's problems and behavior.

1861. "Most opportunely there arrived for Mrs. Lincoln, a present from China, of an elegant tea caddy containing such delicious tea as only emperors use, also four or five valuable books of paintings on rice paper which had been rescued from a burning palace. Books of flowers, birds and high officials in their gorgeous costumes which were a source of endless amusement to the convalescing boys, particularly when I could be drawn in as a delineator for I, even, had caught the spirit of 'story telling.'

"Mr. Lincoln was often summoned as early as five o'clock in the morning to the Cabinet Room and Mrs. Lincoln had repeatedly to send his coffee there nor would he get his breakfast until nine or ten o'clock. But this soon began to tell upon even his iron constitution, and only repeated protests brought about any degree of regularity. Our Western guests had all departed and often Mrs. Lincoln invited well

known friends to breakfast, and then sent word to the President we had company and breakfast was waiting for him. Mr. Galloway of Ohio, 'Sam,' as he was familiarly known, being very genial and merry, was a frequent visitor.

"Mr. Lincoln would come in, looking so sad and harassed, seat himself with a bare nod of recognition, saying, 'Mother, I do not think I ought to have come!' Mr. Galloway would go on with some pleasant anecdote (often purposely begun, with Mr. Lincoln's entrance), for he also was an inveterate joker.

"Presently Mr. Lincoln's mouth would relax, his eyes brighten, and his whole face brighten, as only those who had seen the transformation would believe, and we would be launched into a sea of laughter, he himself falling in with his oft quoted expression 'And this reminds me . . .'

"About this time, Mrs. Lincoln instituted the daily drive, and insisted upon it, as her right, that he should accompany her as this was the only way in which she could induce him to take the fresh air, which he so much needed. . . .

"In some way, the story became current that Mrs. Lincoln 'was not loyal,' 'was a rebel,' 'not in sympathy with her husband' and for a time it was believed by some that she was in communi-

cation with the Confederate Army, as State Secrets had leaked out and it was well known that her brothers and sisters in the South. were active Confederates. This exasperated her beyond measure, as she was heart and soul, with her husband and the Union.

"With her quick womanly wit, she set herself to work to discover, if possible, who the guilty party was, in making these charges. And she did prove, to the satisfaction of those most interested, that a guest in the house was in the habit of listening about the Cabinet room doors, when they were in session and retailing all the information he could thus gather to those only too willing to make use of it. He also reported the visits of a brother and sister of Mrs. Lincoln who have been most kindly entertained and passed by the President through the lines.

"The sister, a wonderfully bright and prepossessing woman from Alabama, won hearts and confidence and went through the lines carrying her weight, almost, in quinine, a veritable bonanza to the Southern Army. Moreover adding insult to injury by telling with great vim the story of her outwitting her too credulous 'brother Lincoln.'

"This, Mr. Lincoln could not forgive and

orders were given that her Southern relatives should not be permitted to enter the house and that any correspondence from them should be placed, by the Secretary, in the waste basket; while the prying guest was notified that home was the best place for him lest a worse thing should happen to him."

Mrs. Grimsley adds here that another Southern family connection, Col. Breckinridge, and Mrs. Lincoln indulged in a "seemingly merry war of words, but there was a perceptible undercurrent of storm and sting as would naturally be the case when two bright, quick, embittered brains and tongues wage a contest. And this was not an unequal one, for Mrs. Lincoln was a woman of fine native mental qualities, vivacious, intellectual and a charming conversationalist. . . .

"While communication with the North by railroads was cut off, Mr. Lincoln proposed that we should go to New York by steamer . . . as far as Perth Amboy where we took train. Our objective point was 'Brewster's' for an open carriage as the weather was growing warm for the coach. We selected it, took a drive in it, spent the whole of the next day at the cemetery, Greenwood, returning only in time for dinner.

Some friends joined us in the evening and the next day we left for Washington. The reporters did not hear of us until after we had left the city but what was our amazement upon taking up the New York papers after our return home to find we had been on an expensive shopping trip: that Lord and Taylor, Arnold & Constable and A. T. Stewart had been largely patronized, that Mrs. Lincoln had bought among other things, a three thousand dollar point lace shawl and Mrs. Grimsley also had indulged to the extent of one thousand in a like purchase (and par parenthesis, this was the nearest I ever came to having one), whereas we had not even driven by the stores.

"Our next trip to New York was after the called session and an appropriation had been made for refurnishing a few of the bedrooms and this time we did not escape the reporters so well for we could not step in or out of our carriage without one of that fraternity being at our elbow and various were the devices made to escape recognition.

"As is well known, Mrs. Lincoln was fond of dress, had fine taste and her husband enjoyed seeing her in full dress, but she did not indulge in one hundredth part of the extravagances with which she and I were credited on that occasion.

"When she bought the dinner set for the Executive Mansion, she ordered a set made for herself with her initial, and this latter, I know, was not paid for by the district commissioner, as was most unkindly charged when it was stored away. Unfortunately, too many presents were sent, marked 'personal gifts' and were accepted, but Mr. Lincoln was not in this respect 'worldly wise' and Mrs. Lincoln could not anticipate the storm of censure that would fall upon her. . . .

"Mrs. Lincoln, soon after our arrival in Washington, was forced, one evening, in the absence of an interpreter to hold a conversation in French with the Chilean Ambassador and wife neither of whom could speak a word of English. With some little hesitation . . . she began, but in a few minutes found her early training in a French school and family, stood her in good stead and thereafter she had no difficulty in speaking with ease."

Mrs. Grimsley regretted that official etiquette forbade Mrs. Lincoln to accompany her and John Hay to the home of Mrs. Charles Eames, whom Charles Francis Adams and William Russell mentioned, you will recall. . . . "Mrs. Charles Eames, whose 'evenings at home' were

recognized by all admitted within that charmed circle as most delightful. There were to be met all the literati, noted musicians, and artists who gathered in Washington. . . . It was a source of regret to us that White House etiquette debarred Mrs. Lincoln from re-unions so enjoyable and which her fine conversational ability so eminently fitted her to participate in.

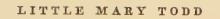
"Among the pleasant guests who frequently spent the morning with us in the delightful sunny library overlooking the grounds and the Washington Monument were N. P. Willis and Motley, the historian—Lady Georgiana Fane and the Hon. Mrs. Clifford, both English ladies and most companionable."

William Seward, says Mrs. Grimsley, when the matter of the first reception of the Lincoln administration came up, indicated that "he proposed to lead off. To this Mrs. Lincoln objected, urging that the first official entertainment should be given by the President. There was some little discussion" but Mrs. Lincoln was clearly in the right and Seward was obliged to fall back. It took the bumptious Secretary of State some time to learn that Mary Lincoln was a doughty warrior. When Prince Napoleon arrived on his visit to Washington, Seward

### MARY TODD LINCOLN

again said, "if the President preferred, he, Seward, would give the dinner following the Prince's arrival. Mrs. Lincoln did not fail to make a prompt objection to this suggestion—and she at once caused one of the Private Secretaries to be summoned and charged with arranging a formal dinner on the day of the Prince's presentation to the President. It was at the same time settled that Mr. Seward should give an evening reception in honor of the Prince on a subsequent day."

This is perhaps a sufficient number of excerpts to convince you as it did me, that here was an extraordinarily interesting human being. So let's get on with the rough-and-ready biography.





Mary Todd, daughter of Robert Todd, President of the First National Bank of Lexington, Kentucky! We come upon her at an embarrassing moment, perhaps. She is fourteen years old and determined to attend the Derby Day races, in spite of the fact that her Presbyterian father and her still more Presbyterian mother have forbidden her to do so and have locked her in her room.

Mary is not as much cast down as might be supposed. She stands by the window, wearing one of her mother's best frocks; a deep rose silk, with a skimpily gathered skirt cut six inches from the ground, a high Byronic collar, enormous puff sleeves and a huge hat with a rose-colored plume standing a foot above the crown.

She is decidedly pretty. The hat cannot conceal the mass of chestnut curls over her shoulders. Her eyes are beautiful, a deep blue, large and set well apart. She has a round little face and a pink and white skin. She puts a foot out the window sill, follows it with its pantaletted fellow, scuttles across the porch roof, goes

monkey fashion down the clematis vine and for the moment we lose her.

It was a long time ago, in 1832, to be exact. But still the story of that escapade of Mary's persists. It was early afternoon and the street, on which stood the Todds' house, was almost deserted. Almost! As Mary ran under the shadow of the syringa hedges, her father appeared from nowhere.

Mary got her life-long love of finery from her father. He wore a bell-shaped blue broadcloth coat and white linen trousers strapped under his boots, and a bell-shaped hat, and a chokingly high stock, and he halted his daughter by obtruding a gold-mounted cane across her path. His temper flared.

"What are you doing here and in your mother's dress? Go home to bed. Miss."

A temper like his own crackled in Mary's blue eyes. "I won't! I'm going to the races with the Thurstons."

Robert Todd did not propose to give a public exhibition of either his own or his daughter's peppery tongue. He took her by the arm, whirled her about and in five minutes, Mary was relocked in her room. Here, she tore off her mother's dress, thrust it in the grate and set fire

to it. Then she burst into tears, shrieked, "Fire! Fire!" until the entire family had crowded into the room, and in an agony of contrition, forced into her mother's hands her savings for four years—and offered to take a whipping!

No one could resist Mary in a repentant mood and she was forgiven. But still, her mother was troubled. Mary's love of dress, Mary's fiery temper were elements of character her mother could not reconcile with the fact that Mary had a scholar's mind. At fourteen Mary led all the girls of her school. And this was no backwoods school. Lexington, in 1832, had earned the name, "Athens of the West." It was the center of a very real culture. It had a University and many private schools where some of the newest European theories of education were being tried out. The wealthy families of Lexington, like the Todds, gave their children solid education.

At this time, Mary and her older sister, Elizabeth, were attending the Mantelli school, where nothing but French was spoken. At fourteen, Mary was the best of an accomplished group of young linguists. At least, it seems like an accomplishment that her schoolmates were able to twit Mary in French with a smattering of Latin on the subject of the attempted runaway and

an indecent exposure of cambric pantaloons as the latest leg coverings were called. It was still more of an accomplishment for Mary to lose her temper in French so completely that the preceptress took an hour to bring her to a proper state of contrition.

Mary was a sensitive, ardent child. It was difficult not to excite her to too great repentance. That night Mary set a punishment upon herself for impertinence to the preceptress.

She appeared the next morning in the astronomy class wearing a dreadful looking frock of linsey-woolsey, dyed with walnut juice. When the preceptress demanded an explanation, Mary replied that as love of clothes was one of her besetting sins, she had decided to remove the object of sin. Therefore, she had exchanged her own wardrobe with that of Tessie Gray, a poor white who lived in a cabin out on the Frankfort turnpike.

She threw the class into convulsions of merriment as she mimicked Tessie's agony of joy over the transaction. Standing with arms akimbo, her body slack, her little feet in Tessie's huge brogans, Mary drawled through her nose:

"I ain't goin' to give these hyer cambric pants up, Miss Mary, now you say they're mine, not if

the Almighty says He wants to wear 'em in heaven."

The preceptress, who had caught herself joining with the children in their avid following of Mary's inimitable description of the details of her penance, rapped on the desk and sent Mary home.

How could one punish a child like Mary Todd so as to teach her self-control? Certainly the preceptress did not know how. Nor her parents. Her father said she'd outgrow her bad temper, quite oblivious to the fact that he'd never outgrown the habit of letting go when he wanted to let go. Her mother hoped that her good blood would tell.

But even if her good blood did not teach her self-control, it, combined with her mother's training, made that good old-fashioned thing, a lady, of her. Mrs. Todd was famous as a hostess in a State where hospitality already was a fine art. Mary was accustomed from birth to a home where guests were frequent and were beautifully entertained. By the time Mary was through school, she was fitted to carry on the family's social traditions.

But she was to have little opportunity to do this in Lexington. Mary's own mother died and a step-mother came to the house on Short Street. Elizabeth married and went to live in Illinois. Small step-brothers appeared. The new Mrs. Todd had little patience with what she called Mary's saucy tongue. There was constant friction that ended, one day, when Mary was nineteen, in Mary's furiously packing her trunk and furiously departing for Springfield, Illinois.

I have an idea that despite its fury, the directing hand of the Lord was in that departure.

Elizabeth had married Ninian Edwards, the attorney-general of Illinois, whose father had been a very great gentleman as well as territorial governor. It was in the young Edwards' home that Mary settled and it was in the Edwards' home that she met the young intellectual élite of the town, among others Stephen A. Douglas and Abraham Lincoln.

Immediately after Mary's arrival in Springfield, the young men organized a cotillion party for her and thus gave her instant opportunity to take her place as a belle of the town. Which she did. She waltzed divinely. Stephen Douglas told Lincoln so, after dancing three times in succession with the new belle.

Lincoln, when Douglas gave him the information, was standing near the refreshment table,

telling a story to a large group of young men. He paused in the tale, looked down from his enormous height at the dwarfish Douglas in his impeccable black broadcloth and ambled over to Miss Todd. He asked her to be his partner in the next square dance.

Mary looked up at this careless giant, in shabby, snuff-colored clothes and heavy shoes. She was much too finicky about people's dress. Yet as she felt her lips curl in scorn, she caught the look of his eyes and told herself that she never had seen such beautiful eyes in a man; gray eyes of an unfathomable sadness and tenderness. She rose and took Lincoln's arm for the dance.

After the quadrille, Lincoln found himself telling her about his night study of Euclid. Mary knew Euclid and engaged him to come the following evening to see her, bringing his book along. He discovered too that Mary knew French and German and her stock with him took another bound. And she was so dainty with all her erudition, so pretty! He kept his engagement the next night and for many nights.

Mary had a gift for friendship with men of the mental type, a gift few women possess. She had not been in Springfield a year before she had established several such friendships. The most solid of these was with Douglas and with Lincoln. Long before they knew it themselves she recognized that both young men were seriously in love with her.

Her brother-in-law, Ninian Edwards and her sister Elizabeth watched with not unanxious interest. Mary was a flirt but one never could tell—! Douglas, whose brilliant future was obvious, was entirely eligible as a suitor. Lincoln, no! A likable fellow but socially an outsider. When Edwards protested against Lincoln's constant presence in the parlor, Elizabeth insisted that Mary's sense of humor and her social ambitions would protect her from Lincoln.

"Why, Mary made fun of him, yesterday," she said, "for benefit of the Sewing Circle. She had us all in convulsions showing how he led her through the Virginia reel. And she can tell a story with every one of Abe's grimaces. One doesn't do that with a man one loves."

"Mary does," retorted Edwards grimly. "Mary would poke fun at the twelve Apostles."

"And wash their feet afterward, with tears!" explained Elizabeth.

"Yes, but that doesn't do away with the hurt to the heart. I wish she could control that tongue

of hers. Just because she's so lovable, makes it all the worse." He sighed and picked up his hat, then came back to say, "You warn Mary that Abe Lincoln as a friend is delightful but that as a suitor, he won't do."

Dutifully, Elizabeth issued the warning the first time she was alone with her sister. Mary tossed her chestnut curls with a laugh.

"The man I'm going to marry, dear Elizabeth, will one day be President of the United States!"

That evening Elizabeth reported to her husband that Mary was planning to marry Stephen Douglas.

In the two years that followed their meeting Mary Todd and Abraham Lincoln grew to know each other well. Lincoln saw many unhappy exhibitions of her hasty tongue. Sometimes, he himself was the victim. On the other hand, she represented to him all that he lacked in family background, in culture, in refinement of mind and manner. More than that, she was utterly lovable and crept into his heart as a brilliant child might have crept.

Lincoln's uncouthness irritated Mary but she had not known him a month before her capacity for keen estimates of human beings told her that the stuff of Lincoln's brain was as much above Douglas' as quartz crystal is above glass. Lincoln excelled any one she'd ever known in mental and moral power. He was the only person she'd ever known whose sense of humor exceeded her own. Her temper at times interfered with her sense of humor, as she ruefully admitted to herself. Lincoln's never.

She was of a type that could love greatly only where she admired greatly. It was not six months after this meeting that Lincoln held Mary Todd's heart in his calloused palm. But she fended him off for a long time. She knew that poverty and toil would be the lot of Lincoln's wife and she wanted to play a little longer. It was, of course, her own hasty tongue that finally betrayed her.

He was careless and absent-minded about his engagements with her. He ambled into the parlor late one winter evening, his Euclid under his arm, to find Mary standing before the grate, in her best party dress, cheeks scarlet, eyes snapping. He recognized the danger signals and threw up both hands.

"Jings, Miss Todd, I forgot all about the cotillion! I got into an argument down at the office about— Well, come along! I won't waste any more time."

Mary looked at the unpolished boots pulled up over the jaded jean pantaloons, at the threadbare, spotted round-about coat, lacking all but one button, at the rusty black stock, half tied, at the unkempt black hair.

"You are not a gentleman," she said in a low voice of fury, "or you neither would forget an engagement with a lady or come into her presence looking like a horse drover."

"No," replied Lincoln gently, "I reckon I never was meant to be either a gentleman or a lady's man. And I don't like that knowledge any better than you do."

She was staring up at him, a new insult forming on her lips when the tragic humility and pride in his beautiful gray eyes pierced through her anger. She gasped as she realized the enormity of what she had said and springing forward, she seized one of his great rough hands in hers and bowed her head upon it.

"Oh, my dear! my dear!" she groaned, "I am not worthy to tie your shoe latchet!"

The Euclid dropped to the floor and Mary was lifted into his mighty embrace and folded to the breast that through life and through death was to be her home.

Mary's various relations did not take the en-

gagement well and did not hesitate to say so. It should have been a quick marriage-let the world go hang! But Lincoln was heavily in debt and was only beginning to build his law practice. He dared not undertake the duties of a husband and father until he was better established. So it was a long and stormy engagement.

Lincoln was neglectful of the small attentions and amenities that make an engagement beautiful, careless in keeping his appointments. Indeed, sometimes it seemed to Mary that he forgot for days that he was engaged. This mortified her and she would reprove him bitterly and go off with Douglas or one of her other admirers to the dance Lincoln had forgotten.

What Mary had not then come to understand was that in some ways Lincoln was abnormally sensitive. Gradually as the months slipped by. he began to think that however much he loved a woman, he was by nature unfitted to make her happy. He grew depressed, spent long hours in his office staring into space. He would listen to Mary's stormy reproaches and repentances with tear-dimmed eves. He resented her constant going with Stephen Douglas and they quarreled about it. And after nearly a year, on the first of January, 1841, he said to her with a heavy sigh:

"You're right, Mary. I'm not fit for anything but the barnyard. So I'm giving you back your freedom," and he walked out of the house and out of her life for many months.







Every one knows that his broken engagement made Lincoln suffer the torments of the damned. What the world has ignored is that Mary Todd suffered as much. Not only was she utterly humiliated, not only did she know that her lack of self-control was partially to blame for the situation, but she loved Lincoln passionately and unwaveringly. No other man ever could or ever did enter her life. She became ill with her suffering as did Lincoln. He finally went to recuperate with his friend Speed in Louisville but Mary remained in Springfield. She gave away her trousseau.

In the fall of 1842 Lincoln returned to Springfield and settled down to work, dejectedly enough. One evening, he went to call at the home of Simeon Francis, editor of the Sangamon Journal, who was a great friend of both Lincoln and Mary. The two men were talking in the parlor when the outer door slammed and Mary appeared, blinking in the lamplight. She gasped and turned to go but Lincoln made one great stride and seized her by both hands.

"The court is taking a recess, Francis," he said over his shoulder and the editor fled. "Mary," Lincoln went on, huskily, "I am the most miserable man living. If what I feel were equally distributed to the whole human family, there would not be one cheerful face on earth."

She looked up into the gray eyes that were so inexpressibly dear to her and although her lips quivered she could not prevent a dimple from appearing at the corner of her mouth as she said, "Misery loves company."

But for once Lincoln would not smile. "I've reached the point where I realize I'll never be anything but a husk of a man without you. I don't see how you could mourn for a fellow like me but Francis says you have."

Mary threw her pride to the winds. "I shall go widowed all my life, Abr'am, without you!"

Lincoln turned her face up to his. "Then we're going to be married before our friends or your relatives know what's happening. I reckon I've learned my lesson."

A few days later, Lincoln met Ninian Edwards on the street and informed him that he and Mary were going to be married that evening in the Episcopal Church.

Edwards, who was over six feet tall, drew

himself up to utter a retort that should once and for all put the quietus on Lincoln. But the look he caught in the gaunt face above his own caused a sudden change in his words. What came forth, though grudgingly, was:

"No, Mary is my ward and must be married from my house."

Thus on the rainy evening of November 4, 1842, in the parlor of the Edwards' home, Mary Todd and Abraham Lincoln were married. There were no attendants. There were not more than thirty people present. And Mary, who had all her life looked forward to the magnificence of her wedding dress and outfit, was married in her muslin dress with neither veil nor flowers.

Lincoln had prepared no home for Mary. They went to live in the Globe Tavern, kept by the Widow Beck. Their room and board cost them four dollars a week. But they did not stay in the Tavern long after Bobbie was born in the summer of 1843. Mary induced her husband to make the plunge and they bought a story-and-a-half frame house with a barn and well-fenced yard in a good neighborhood. She knew that it would take them many years to pay for it but she had learned, too, that her husband worked best under pressure.

Temperamentally, Mary was a Sybarite. She could not have endured without breaking, the labor and the deprivations of those early years of marriage had she not finally achieved the finest luxury that can be vouchsafed to marriage—complete mental companionship with the man she had married.

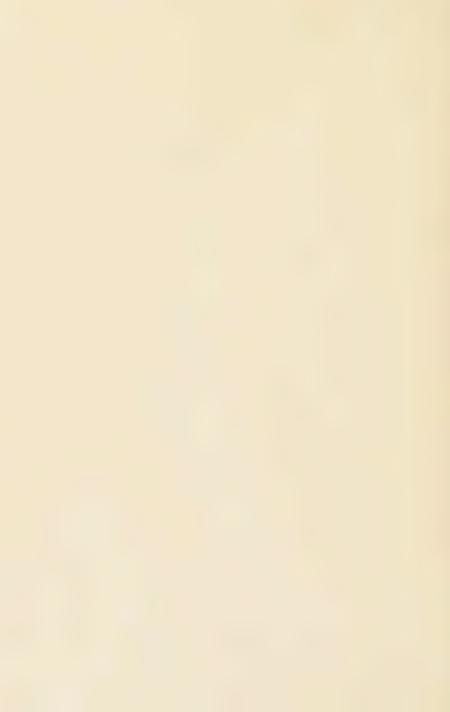
They both cherished that companionship. After his marriage, Lincoln spent less and less time sitting around the sawdust spittoons in the stores of Springfield, arguing and swapping yarns. Mary was educating him. He spent more and more time in study and in general reading. However scantily the larder might be supplied, Mary saw to it that in the parlor there were always good books and she made her husband read these books aloud to her and discuss them with her. She read French and German poetry and philosophy and a French journal to him, regularly, translating as she read in her vivid, eager voice. No one could read or tell a story more expressively than Mary Lincoln.

One marvels at her energy. She did all her own sewing and housework. She kept everlastingly at Lincoln about his bad manners. She saw that he was dressed properly—at least he ceased to wear jeans in court and top boots to



THE LINCOLN HOME IN SPRINGFIELD, ILLINOIS

From the Frederick H. Meserve Collection



dinner parties. Their home was beautifully ordered and in spite of poverty, they began to build a reputation for hospitality.

Bobbie was almost three years old when their second son was born and named after their close friend, Edward D. Baker. Bob was a precocious youngster whom Lincoln spoiled, outrageously. Lincoln's incapacity as a father was rapidly becoming a real anxiety to Mary. There were days when Bob was so naughty and his father so lackadaisical that Mary's nerves flew to pieces and Lincoln fled the house, leaving Mary to wrestle alone with the child he had spoiled,—the wretched kitchen stove, the empty larder, the teething little Eddie.

Lincoln often mourned to his friends that he was not a "good provider." Poor Mary at first was constantly dogging him to split the kindling, to attend to the winter's supply of wood, to lay in the stock of winter vegetables. But finally she saw that herein she could not change him and she ceased to demand anything of him in the house, but concentrated entirely on pushing him forward in his profession and in politics.

Both of them having such pronounced characteristics, it took a long time for them to make the marriage adjustment. But they climbed the

tinal bill top to understanding when they had been married about seven years. Lincoln had been backsliding in the matter of spending his evenings at home. He was running for Congress and that gave him an excuse for many a long evening in his office with Herndon, his partner, swapping yarns in the old backelor manner. After all, a spoiled boy, a sickly baby, a peppery wife, take the savor out of the most orderly home, at times.

Mary was hurt and worried. She didn't like Herndon. With her incamny skill at sizing up men, she had seen his dangerous weaknesses from the moment of their meeting in 1840. He drank too much, used drugs, was lax with women. He had a strong hold on her husband's affection and admiration. She had a right to worry. And the more she fussed, the more Lincoln stayed away from home.

Eddie was the very darling of Mary's heart. He was the quaintest baby in the world. At four he was a long, lean, brown little chap with pathetic gray eyes and humorous full mouth, the image of his father. A thoughtful, dreamy child full of odd fancies like, his mother said. Paul Dombey. In the middle of January, 1850. Eddie was taken ill. It did not seem serious but

## THE CRUCIBLE

his deep affection for the child made Lincoln anxious and he did his utmost to share the nursing with Mary.

After two weeks of slow fever, it looked as if the worst was over and Lincoln ventured to stay downtown until after midnight one evening, talking atheism with Herndon. About the time he started for home, a little moan from Eddie startled Mary, reading beside him. The child was in violent convulsion and before she could apply a single remedy, he was dead, a stiff, blue little image in her arms.

Lincoln heard her shriek as he entered the back door. He made the stairs in a leap and rushed into the bedroom.

"Mary!"

"Eddie! Look! Look!" holding the little body toward him. "Dead! My baby! My little son!"

Lincoln stared, horrified. "It can't be! It's just a fit! I'll get the doctor!"

But Mary knew. It was death. She could not let Lincoln go. "Don't leave me alone again. I shall go mad."

Lincoln gave a great groan. "You were alone with him while I fooled with Herndon. If I had been here to get the doctor, right away—"

But Mary would not blame him now. "If I'd not been a shrew," she wept, "you'd have been here!"

"God has punished us both!" Great tears ran down Lincoln's cheeks and, clasped in each other's arms, Eddie's father and mother mingled bitter tears of loss and of regret.

Long after the little fellow's death, they grieved for Eddie with the extravagance inherent in their peculiar natures. But, as if God had, indeed, a purpose in the tragedy, the Lincolns found themselves working together in a harmony they never before had achieved. Their love deepened to a complete understanding.

More and more, Mary gave the force of her tremendous personality to moving Lincoln forward on his career. She entertained more and more. People who went to the Lincoln home said that the two were utterly unique. Lincoln with his perpetual fund of stories and his wife with her witty tongue that sometimes hurt but was always funny and with her kindness of heart that permitted no guest, however humble, to feel that he was not one of the important personages present. Mary acquired a reputation for the Southern cooking on her table.

In December 1850, another son, William Wal-

lace, was born and in April, 1853, a fourth son, Thomas, whom his father called Tadpole. Just before Willie's birth, a crisis came in Lincoln's career. He came home one day and said that he'd been offered the job of territorial Governor of Oregon and that he wanted to accept it.

To his astonishment, Mary shook her head, vehemently. "No! They are merely trying to hide you on the Pacific coast, Abr'am, because they fear you on the Atlantic."

"Nonsense!" protested Lincoln. "I've no more reputation than a yellow dog in the East. I'd like to go out into that wonderful new country. I think we'd do well. Perhaps we could get out of debt."

"You are meant for better things, Abr'am. The Almighty had a reason for giving you your wonderful brain and your unassailable balance. Some day He'll show you that reason, unmistakably, and you must be free to follow."

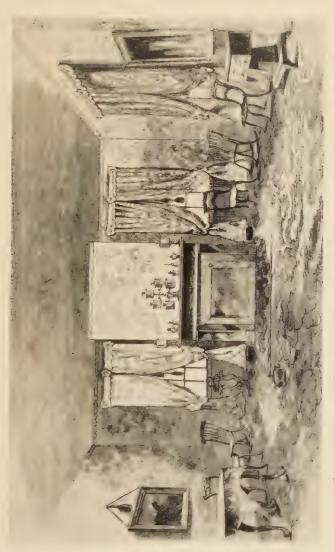
And although different committees of politicians waited on her, urging her to change her decision, Mary stood fast. Abraham Lincoln, she told herself, was going into the White House, not into the woods of Oregon.

The terrible question of slavery was now tearing at the vitals of the nation. Mary studied

the question, and read omnivorously, handing on to him epitomes of what he had no time to read for himself. She took notes on his speeches whenever she could leave the babies, criticized them and made suggestions. When his friends suggested that he debate the slavery question with Stephen A. Douglas, Mary was enthusiastic. Money! She'd find it, somehow. The children! She'd manage, somehow. And she did. She wrote her cousin while the debates were going on that although she was sitting in the kitchen, one foot on the cradle rocker, one hand stirring the stew pot while the other held the pen, she wished her sister to realize that Mary Todd was married not only to one of the Lord's saints but to a saint who was also one of the intellectual marvels of the world. "And I know his intellect for I've helped to stock it with facts!"

He needed a manager for all the externals of life and Mary was that manager during all the years of preparation for the "far off, divine event."

The debates with Douglas launched him well on the road to the Presidency. During the summer of 1860 Mary entertained extensively. She took an extra "hired girl," used a Chicago caterer



SITTING-ROOM IN ABRAHAM LINCOLN'S HOUSE, SPRINGFIELD, ILLINOIS Original (about 1860) in collection of Illinois State Historical Library



when necessary, made herself several party dresses with crinolines as enormous as those of any Broadway belle and kept open house for the well-known men and women who came from all parts of the United States to consult with her husband.

On election day Mary suffered more from nerves than did her husband. He spent the day in his crowded office. There were a good many callers at the Lincoln home in the afternoon but in the evening the house was deserted. Mary, with the boys, went downtown for a little while and looked in at the hall where her husband was surrounded by an enormous and noisy crowd of men and women shouting out the early returns and singing:

"Oh, ain't you glad you joined the Republican party!"

She felt that the boys ought to hear the acclaim their father was receiving. Her only regret was that Eddie had not lived to witness it. But she could not bear the excitement and shortly she returned with the children to the quiet house. The boys went to bed. Mary sat beside the lamp sewing and thinking. It was nearing dawn when her husband came in. His face was ghastly white in the lamplight.

## MARY TODD LINCOLN

"Mary," he said huskily, "God help us, they have elected me!"

She rose and stood for a moment, supporting her weak knees against her chair, a sudden and inexplicable sadness choking her. Lincoln stared at her, then held out his arms and husband and wife clasped each other in a long embrace. WASHINGTON



AND now was to come the acid testing of Mary Lincoln's character.

The President's salary of \$25,000 seemed like untold riches to Mary, when she finally had access to it, but she did not lose her head, at first. The White House was in a badly run-down condition when the Lincolns moved into it. Mary had no idea how much it would cost to renovate it or how many servants were actually needed to run it. With the common sense of the experienced housewife, she discharged the steward and undertook to run the place until she understood its needs.

With this move rose the first whisper of

gossip.

The Lincolns had been in the White House about a week when Mary, splendid in a purple grenadine, swept into young Stoddard's office. Stoddard was the third of Lincoln's secretaries and among other duties was to help Mary with the social work of the Administration. She tossed a letter before him.

"How can I have the author of that arrested," she cried.

Stoddard read, "You do your own work because you have been a servant yourself. Both you and your husband are known to have nigger blood in your veins. You had better not insult the Southern aristocracy of Washington by making any advances toward them."

Young Stoddard flushed. "It's anonymous. You'll receive many such, Madame President. Don't read them!"

"Don't be a fool!" exclaimed Mary. "I must know what I have to meet, mustn't I!"

She seized the letter and coming upon her husband in the hall, insisted that he read it at once.

He took her into his room and scanned the letter with an arm around her shoulders. When he had finished, he said in a tone of firmness she seldom had heard from him:

"Mary, I forbid you ever to read such sewage again. We'll get a lot of that stuff. We will give it the deaf ear."

He threw the letter in the grate and left her. She set her lips firmly and went on with her task of inspecting the contents of the White House. The carpets and matting in every part of the building to which the public had access

were thick stained with tobacco juice as were the walls as high as a man comfortably could spit. Mary ordered the floor coverings taken up and burned and the walls repapered. Hardly had the flames died down in the stable yard when letters of protest, couched in the most insulting terms, began to appear on Mary's desk. She wept bitterly, lashed out at young Stoddard, threatening to sell the very manure in the White House stables if necessary to procure the money to make the mansion decent. Then she learned that Congress, if pressed, would make an adequate appropriation for renovating the Executive Mansion. Mary took steps to hurry the appropriation.

But this brought the newspapers about her ears. They declared that Mrs. Lincoln was meddling in politics and one enterprising journalist reported that she constantly forced her way into the Cabinet room to row with the members over their policies.

For a while it looked to Mary as if all the years of fighting for self-control were to be useless in the face of this type of torment. She could not stand under the lash of innuendo. But she got help from unexpected quarters.

Sumner was calling on Mary, one summer

evening. Charles Sumner, Senator from Massachusetts was one of the few noble personalities in Washington. Physically as well as mentally, he was superb. He was six feet, four inches tall, with fine blue eyes and regular, clean-cut features of the sober New England type. To see Sumner and Lincoln together was to see America's supreme giants.

He was the great anti-slavery leader in Congress and Chairman of the Foreign Relations Committee, so he was much at the White House.

Mary and Sumner met at the Inaugural Ball. They liked each other immediately. Sumner was Mary's type of man, intellectual and of the polite world. In his turn, Sumner was astonished to find in Lincoln's wife a woman of exceptional intelligence and breadth of education. Their mutual fondness for French was an immediate bond and they made the most of it. By midsummer they were exchanging French books and frequently conversed in that tongue.

On this particular evening, Mary actually had brought a shout of laughter from the serious-eyed Sumner by her mimicry of Horace Greeley in his favorite act of lecturing her husband. But she did not allow him to laugh long for she added, after the mock-Greeley had disappeared:

"He had the impertinence to warn Mr. Lincoln, also, against my intriguing with the South! Senator, do you know they say I am a spy, because I have half-brothers in the Rebel army?"

"I have heard so," admitted Sumner.

"But why am I treated so?" begged Mary. "I am as innocent as Taddie. Yet they insult me at my own dinner parties."

"You, too, are a victim of slavery," replied Sumner, sadly. "The ruling social set here prides itself on being Southern. Its members, male and female, hate this Administration, violently. They say you are a renegade Southerner—one of themselves gone over to the enemy side. You are of a slave-holding family, yet you ardently uphold the hands of the man who hates slavery. I tell you frankly, dear Mrs. Lincoln, they are bent on your social ruin."

Mary swept up and down the room in her trailing gray and pink velvet, then paused to shake a small finger before the enormous Senator's vest button.

"I'll fight them, inch by inch," she cried.

"You can't fight malicious gossip, I've found," said Sumner. "Ignore it, Mrs. Lincoln. Give your mind to your husband's great problems."

#### MARY TODD LINCOLN

"I'll try," replied Mary, but through set teeth.

And she did try. Heaven knows there were sufficient other troubles to occupy her mind. She was worried lest her husband's long-suffering nature make him too easy a prey for the unscrupulous both in and out of his Cabinet, soldiers as well as politicians. Her gift for sizing people up was invaluable to Lincoln, when he could force himself to act upon her estimates.

She warned him that he would never be President in anything but name until he had reduced Seward and Chase to their proper places, as subordinates. "Chase is an intriguer," she insisted, "and Seward is drunk with authority."

She told Lincoln, after her first interview with young General McClellan, "Your hero is a humbug. He is a coward and ambitious. He'll make himself dictator if you don't watch him."

Very early she lost patience with her husband's admiration for Horace Greeley. "What sort of a man is this," she demanded, "who screams invectives at you and at the South, then crawls under the bed and begs you to make peace with the South at any price!"

When Andrew Johnson was put forward as

#### WASHINGTON

military Governor of Tennessee, she warned Lincoln, "He's a demagogue and if you place him in power, you and the country will one day rue it."

When Grant was at the beginning of his successes, she protested, "He'll win, but, Abr'am, he's a butcher. He loses two men to the enemies' one. He has no regard for human life."

It was an inevitable aspect of her bitter fate that the very qualities in her that helped to make her husband an immortal hero, fed the malignant tongues that ruined her fame. Her indomitable will and ambition would not allow her for a long time to give up the social struggle. She planned the social side of the White House life with her usual skill but she got nowhere. It was said and generally believed that she was a coarse parvenu, without social training, utterly unbalanced by her sudden elevation to grandeur. She was called low, coarse, gaudy, loud and a snob. She was threatened with assassination. Anonymous letters warned her that her boys would be kidnaped as well as her husband.

She said to Sumner, one evening early in 1862, "Senator, do you realize that I am one of the most hated persons in this unhappy country? It

is like a fog pressing about me, day and night. I believe it will kill me, this hatred."

"Can you not give up all but the essential official entertainments, dear Mrs. Lincoln, and—"

"—And dress in a bag without a crinoline," interrupted Mary with a sad little laugh, "and give up your friendship—you've heard that gossip."

"A little. No one dares very much to me, I

assure you."

"They call it an affaire d'amour and write Mr. Lincoln dreadful things, signed, 'An eye witness.' If it is hurting your prestige, dear Mr. Sumner, I'll understand if you never call on me again." But her eyes were full of tears.

"I wouldn't understand," returned Sumner grimly. "Friendship is an eternal matter with me. Such prestige as I have has survived the worst that human tongues can say. Let us forget it." He paused and stared out the window at the raw, unfinished shaft of the Washington monument. Then he went on sadly, "When I was assaulted in the Senate Chamber in 1851, no one thought I would live. In the weary months of illness that followed, my thoughts were much on my unfinished fight against slavery, but in the midnight watches my keen, heart-

gnawing regret was that if I were called away, I never had enjoyed the choicest experience of life, that no lips responsive to my own had said, 'I love you.' When I recovered it was with the determination that as soon as I could afford to marry I would. Alas, it seems, however, I'm not the type women wish to marry! But I have friendships with some noble women. You are one of them. I intend not to sacrifice a single friendship for all the gossip in America."

Sumner's fine declaration could but hearten her and she staggered on with her social burden. But she did not go far. Early in 1862 she received two blows that for a time completely submerged her. The first was an accusation from a member of the Cabinet that she had falsified a bill sent to the State Department for entertaining Prince Napoleon.

When Lincoln, sick with sympathy for her, took the matter up with her, she did not fly into a rage. He only wished she had. He knew how to handle Mary's little tempers. But she looked up at him with horror unutterable in her eyes.

"Abr'am! Abr'am!"

"I know, dear Mary. But I reckon you'll have to take it up with Sumner, personally. Can you keep a cool head?"

"Yes," with a sob, "because this breaks my spirit at last. I could keep my chin up when they accused me of extravagance, of miserliness, of being a traitor and an unfaithful wife, but when they accuse me of petty larceny, I'm through! We all have our breaking point."

It was easy to prove her innocence in the case, but Mary could not bear to appear at the next State dinner.

When the second blow came, she was in no shape to take it well. It was Willie's death of typhoid in February. As every mother does in like cases, she suffered not only Willie's death but lived again the agony of baby Eddie's going. As the child breathed his last, Mary, who had been without real sleep for two weeks, collapsed and Lincoln rose from his knees by Willie's bed to carry his wife to her room. She was too ill to attend the funeral. But when a few days later, Lincoln shut himself in his room, overcome at last by grief, and refused to see any one or carry on his work, she rose from her bed and went to him and won control of her own grief in assuaging his. She was the only person ever in Lincoln's life who could lift his periodical black moods.

#### WASHINGTON

After Willie's death, Mary never again went into the room where the child died.

Sumner now suggested that she turn her splendid executive ability to hospital work. The suggestion was exactly in tune with her state of mind. Before she had been at the work a week, the crowded, ill-organized hospitals in and around Washington began to feel the impulse of her helping hand. She had a gift for organizing and for saying the right thing to the sick and the troubled. She retreated more and more into herself. She talked very little, except to her husband and to young Stoddard about this activity which came to be so large a part of her lonely life.

Young Stoddard tried to persuade her to allow the reporters to go with her on her hospital rounds and publish the story. He told her it would help enormously to counteract the talk against her. But Mary had had enough of publicity, good or bad, and the beautiful story of her hospital service never was told.

The hospital work, her keen interest in the political situation here and abroad, helped to restore her balance. Charles Sumner was making an abolitionist of her and Mary turned the

force of her convictions loose on Lincoln during those months that he was making up his mind to free the slaves. No one backed the Emancipation Proclamation more intelligently nor more ardently nor with more value to him than his wife.

With the loosening of her social efforts, gossip did not die down, but it took a new direction. It now included Lincoln and his domestic life. Stories of terrible quarrels between the Lincolns became current. Lincoln (who did not drink) was believed, broadly, to have beaten his wife while he was drunk, and at another time to have thrown her bodily out of a Cabinet session. It was asserted that Lincoln had forbidden Sumner the house.

But most persistent were the rumors about Mary's harboring spies in the White House. One of these that was most circumstantial concerned Mrs. Rose O'Neal Greenhow, a Southern woman who lived in Washington. She had on July 16, 1861, sent the famous cipher message to Beauregard, "Order issued for McDowall to move on Manassas to-night." Acting on this, Beauregard promptly arranged his army for the expected attack, while Johnston and Stonewall

Jackson hastened from the Shenandoah Valley to help block the Federal movements.

The Federal Detective Police were not long in unearthing Mrs. Greenhow. On August 26, Allen Pinkerton arrested her and put her under military guard in her home in 16th Street. But this did not stop the clever woman's activities, so she was shortly transferred to the Old Capitol Prison, where she remained until April 1862. Here it was said Mrs. Lincoln visited her and gave her information. It was a proved fact that Mrs. Greenhow was in constant and extensive correspondence with Colonel Thomas Jordan of General Beauregard's staff and that she gave him information which could have come only from the White House. For a long time, Colonel Baker, one of the Federal police, sought to discover her method. Then she was suddenly on June 2, 1862, after pledging her word not to come north of the Potomac until the war was over, escorted beyond the Union lines and set at liberty.

There was a great deal of hostile comment on this move. Gossip had it that it was Mrs. Lincoln who had saved the woman from being shot as a spy. It was said that Tad and Mrs. Greenhow's daughter had been used by the two mothers for spy reporting and a good deal of circumstantial evidence piled up to prove the accusation.

At this point in my work I felt as if I were seeing through a glass darkly. Was the temptation too much? Did Mary Todd, the Kentuckian, allow herself to be used, or Taddie to be used, by the South when she thought, perhaps, it would do no real harm? . . . How could she have been so stupid? I asked myself. She was keen. Did her uneven temper and her tendency to hysteria bring occasional disaster to the Federal Cause? Was Lincoln's own pet weakness, his soft heart, occasionally as culpable as Mary's hysteria? It was very confusing. How could Mrs. Lincoln and Tad have gotten themselves mixed with the Mrs. Greenhow conspiracy? Perhaps, I told myself, it were well to pause there and paint myself a detailed picture of Mary and Tad in the White House: the wretched gossip of that unhappy period was beginning to shake me. I must make myself sec Washington in 1862, see the White House, see Taddie and his mother.

And so I laid aside the biography for two or three weeks and wrote the account of Tad's spy.



Tad's father and mother talked in a worried way at the breakfast table about an aunt who was visiting them. Colonel Baker, the police detective, had notified them that she was smuggling quinine through the rebel lines into Richmond.

"I'm terribly humiliated!" exclaimed Tad's mother. "She must go home to Kentucky, at once. I wish," with a little smile, "that it was one of your relatives, Abr'am, instead of mine! The country's so sure that I'm a Southern sympathizer that if this gets out, it'll settle me in their minds, for good and all."

"Well," said Tad's father, "they've said so many worse things about me, that being called a rebel sympathizer would seem like a kindness. And I reckon I wouldn't feel too much humiliated, if I were you. Postmaster-General Blair's sister-in-law was put in the Old Capitol Prison yesterday for the same offense. Blair's in an awful stew about it."

"What!" ejaculated his mother. "Miss—," she interrupted herself with a glance at Tad,

who was devouring pancakes and molasses and missing not a word of the conversation. "What! Miss L. L. B.," she went on.

"The same," replied Tad's father, "and she's sick or pretending to be, and Blair's insisting that I do something. And, of course, whatever I do for her, I'll have to do for Aunty, and vice versa. Miss B—— refuses to make any promises, so I can't parole her. That complicates the disposing of Aunty."

"I'm very fond of Miss B—," said Tad's mother, "and I think she is of me, though these days, one never knows." She fell into a troubled silence.

Tad racked his eight-year-old brains to think of something cheerful to say. Somehow, since Willie's death in February, the meals had been uncomfortable. He was a little confused as to whether it was the loss of his brother or the war growing worse that increased the feeling of sadness with which he left the table each day. There was a new worry for each meal. Last night it had been General McClellan's slowness in capturing Richmond. Yet in spite of knowing that something horrid would be sure to come up at breakfast, he had come down that morning almost happy. In place of his black suit, his

mother had allowed him to put on his Zouave uniform with baggy red flannel pants and a bright blue coat. Also there was sunshine: the happy sunshine of a May morning after a week of rain. The family dining-room, so dreary when it rained, was flooded with morning light and gay with yellow tulips from his mother's gardens. The room didn't seem so large when there were no shadows around the huge sideboards.

Tad could think of no way to put these thoughts into words that would divert the conversation, so he deliberately poured a flood of molasses over his pancakes. But his mother did not protest and his father did not wink at him. The silence was horrible.

Suddenly his father broke it. "If only it's nothing worse than contraband! But news is going steadily to Richmond from here. Cabinet news, as well as war plans. Does Aunty know Miss B——?"

"They've met at tea here," replied his mother. "My dear, I wish you'd let me go visit Miss B——."

"Miss L. L. B." appended Tad with his mouth full.

"Taddie, you repeat anything you hear at this

table and I'll smack you," said his mother,

sharply.

His father was looking at her thoughtfully. "Might not be a bad idea," he said. "I mean the visit!" with a wink at Tad.

"I'm going too," announced Tad. "I want to see how a pwison looks."

"If you come, you'll only see the outside of it,"

declared his mother.

"Why?" shrilled Tad, indignantly.

"Because," replied his mother, with finality.

Thus it happened that very soon after breakfast, a pretty, rather plump little lady with black silk skirts billowing over a crinoline so huge that the small boy in a Zouave uniform seemed no more than the gay tassel to a parasol made her way up the path to the door of the old Capitol, now used as a war prison.

The guard at the entrance stared with interest at the pair and smiled at Tad who whimpered when his mother again refused to allow him to enter with her and left him on the doorstep.

"There's a little girl yonder that you can play

with," the guard suggested.

"I don't like gals," growled Tad, turning to stare nevertheless.

A small park, planted with trees, lay before



"Tad" Lincoln
From the collection of Frederick H. Meserve



ROBERT TODD LINCOLN
Copied from a photograph in the callection of
the Hilmois State Historical Society



the prison. On a bench under a tiny pink magnolia sat a child holding a hoop and staring at Tad. She was a handsome little girl with long, fair hair worn tight back from her forehead under a round comb. Tad, pushing his kepi over his ear, sauntered toward her. He came to pause not a foot from the bench and eyed the pantalettes and white stockings exposed by the undulations of the crinoline that distended her black dimity skirts. Girls' clothes were queer.

For a full moment neither child spoke—then

the little girl remarked:

"Well, Mr. Smarty, what are you looking at?" "On a boy, they's dwa's. I don't know what gals call 'em."

"Dwa-a-s! You talk like a baby; and you look like one too," taking in with scornful eyes of blue the round cherubic face, the soft violet eyes and the delicate mouth of the little boy.

"I'm no baby," protested Tad angrily. "But I won't be able to say the letta' that comes befo's till they cut something unda' my tongue. I'm eight. How old a' you?"

"Ten. Let's see what's under your old tongue?"

Tad obligingly opened his mouth and the little girl scrutinized the interior thus exposed.

"I don't see anything in particular," she reported, in a disappointed way. "What's your name?"

"Thomas. But evalbody calls me Tad because when I was a baby papa nicknamed me Tadpole. What's you' name:" seating himself beside her.

"Rose. Is your mother going to stay in prison?"

"Nope. She just went in to call on anotha' lady: a friend that's been giving medicine to the webels. My aunt's been doing it too. Maybe they'll put us all in jail just for that. Then I'll kill all the guards and get us all out."

Rose sniffed but looked at Tad a trifle less disdainfully.

"When' do you live?" asked the little boy.

"Oh. I just visit around," answered Rose, vaguely. "Where bouts do you live?"

"At the White House. My fatha's Pwesident!" tossing his head.

"Shucks! What a lie!" taking up her stick and preparing to roll the hoop.

"It's not!" shouted Tad, eatthing the hoop and holding it fast.

"Leave go this hoop! I can't play with

strange boys, specially boys that tell silly whoppers."

"You just come along with me and I'll show you," shouted Tad.

Rose hesitated for a moment. Then she said, "Well, I'm sick of this old park day after day, so I guess I just as soon come, just to prove you're a hig liar," with a switch of her head that sent her bright hair over either shoulder.

Tad stamped his foot and shouting at the guard, "You tell my motha' I've gone home," started off at a run.

Rose followed, trundling the hoop.

The White House gardens were a blazing glory of tulips and reeling sweet with lilac and magnolia. Tad led the way through the turnstile gate from the Treasury grounds and pausing before one of the beds flung his arm wide.

"All this ga'den is my motha's."

Rose permitted herself to look mildly interested, but she said, "Anybody could come into this garden and say that."

Tad seized her hand—she was only a little taller than he—and said, fiercely, "You come with me!"

He led her to the iron steps before the beautiful south portico. Here Rose paused. "I'm not

going in where Abe Lincoln lives," she declared. "He murders children. My mother says so."

Tad gave her a look commingled of anguish and wrath, lifted a grimy little hand and slapped her mouth. Then he burst into tears. "He wouldn't kill a louse," he sobbed.

Rose dropped her hoop and scratched Ted's cheeks with a pair of practical little paws. Then she began to cry. James, the colored houseman who was sweeping the portico, hastened to separate them.

"What for did you hit this little gal, Massa Taddie?" he inquired, holding either sobbing child by the arm.

"She said my fatha' killed childwen," shrieked Tad. "You leave go of me, James. I'm going to make he' go up and look at papa day."

"Take your hand off me, nigger!" ordered Rose, with a sudden cessation of tears.

James freed her, saying in a dignified tone, "I reckon the best thing to do with this here Reb, Massa Tad, is to show her to Massa Lincum."

Rose turned pale and would have run away had Tad not clung to her black skirts. "You got to see him and tell all the webs how kind he is." Then between set teeth, as Rose continued to struggle. "Cowa'dy cat, 'fwaid of a wat,

'fwaid of a bat, 'fwaid of a slat, 'fwaid of a—All Webs a' 'fwaidy cats."

"They're not. I'll come," said the little girl, stifling a sob.

They crossed the portico and entered the state dining room where Rose stared at the great crystal chandelier. They picked their way up the private staircase and along the family hall to folding doors which Tad opened, disclosing the public reception room, before the President's office. Billy Stoddard, the young secretary who sat at the desk in the reception room, said warningly, "Your father's very busy, Tad," but, having known Tad for over a year, he made no further attempt to waylay the children.

The President's office faced south with great windows that framed the Potomac and the fairy hills of Virginia. General Jackson scowled from a gilt frame over the mantel down upon the huge old Cabinet table. A tall desk of many pigeon holes stood near one of the windows. A man in a loose gray suit, his black hair rumpled, sat before this desk, talking to another man who pounded his fist against the Cabinet table as he shouted replies and questions: a man with spectacles and a dark beard which had a peculiar streak of silver at the chin.

Dragging the shrinking Rose, Tad pushed between the two men. "Papa day,—this gal believes you kill childwen. You tell he', you show he'— Oh, how can they, papa day!" suddenly flinging his arms around his father and with a great sob, kissing him.

His father put a long arm around Tad and smiled at Rose. He had strong, white teeth and a smile of extraordinary beauty. At the sight of it, color began to return to the little girl's face.

"Well, Tad," said his father, "your little friend looks good and pretty enough to eat but saying that doesn't prove I'm a murderer, I hope." A faint dimple stirred in Rose's cheek. "Whose little girl are you, my dear?"

"I'm not allowed to tell, sir," replied Rose in a voice so small that Tad looked at her with astonishment.

"He' name is Wose and she lives awound with he' kin folks like some of oua' aunts and uncles do," volunteered Tad.

"If she were kin to me," said Tad's father, "she'd never live with but one relative and that would be me. I've always hankered for a little daughter with blue eyes and yellow hair."

Rose edged a little nearer. "Supposing the little girl was a Secessionist!" she asked.

"What's politics got to do with it as long as she's an honest, loving little child?" demanded Tad's father.

She placed a delicate hand on his knee. "My father was killed by the Yanks at Bull Run."

Tad's father lifted his other arm about her waist. "What a pity—"

A great roar from the man beside the Cabinet table interrupted him,—his spectacled face was purple.

"Is this a nursery, perpetually? I tell you what, Mr. Lincoln, I'm not coming here again. You come to the War Office when you want me. You'll not find my children intruding there." He turned angrily toward the door.

Tad's father said slowly, "You tell General McDowell to leave Fredericksburg to help McClellan's drive on Richmond, not later than the twenty-sixth of this month. They'd better not go by water as McClellan suggests. It takes too long."

"Water would be better," grunted Stanton, "even if slower."

"Speed is important," insisted Tad's father. "Those Rebels are like so much quicksilver. I believe General Banks will be able to keep that

fellow they call Stonewall Jackson off McClellan's backsides for a while but—"

"Come on, Wose, let's go!" murmured Tad. "I'll show you my day goat, Nannie."

Rose followed him with alacrity. "What's a day goat?" she asked as they reached the hall. "Different from a night goat?"

Tad paused in the hall to stamp his foot at her. "A day goat, I said; like you begin a letta': my day uncle John."

"Oh! you mean dear. Then your father is papa dear." Rose giggled and Tad's blue eyes flashed, then softened as the little girl added, "But I think dear just suits your father. If my mother'll let me, I'm coming here again."

As it turned out, Rose's mother was entirely willing. Rose, after a very satisfactory morning with Tad and day Nannie, trundled her hoop back through the May sunshine to the Old Capitol Prison and asked the guard at the door to let her see her mother. The guard turned her over to the matron. The matron examined her to see that she was not concealing something contraband in her clothing, then led her down the corridor to a room that overlooked the top of a budding horse chestnut.

A noble-looking woman, a replica of Rose,

sat by the window writing. The room, which had been a committee room of the old Capitol, was large and not uncomfortably furnished in mahogany that had seen much service in the early days. And while it was not much of a boudoir it still could be used. The liquor buffet made a bureau and dressing table. The Empire sofa, a day bed; the bookcase made a wardrobe.

Rose's mother, who sat in a mahogany rocker writing on a little lap desk, looked up with a start of pleasure as the child burst in.

"Well, Rose, I thought not to see you until to-

"Mother! Now, mother, listen! Abe Lincoln likes children. You were mistaking, if you don't mind my saying so, mother. He was so kind to me, mother, and Tad, he's lots of fun. He's just like a little pepper pot, mother, with lots of sugar in it." Rose stopped for breath, staring pleadingly at her mother as though altogether uncertain how her news would be received.

Rose's mother frowned a little. "Get your breath, daughter, and tell me clearly. Is it possible that you've been playing with Tad Lincoln, the Yankee President's son?"

"Yes, I have." Rose's lips quivered. "And

### MARY TODD LINCOLN

he doesn't look like a Yank. He looks like a human boy, he does, mother."

The frown deepened. "Where did you meet him, daughter?"

Rose swallowed hard. "Now it was thisaway—"

"Dear me, you talk like a nigger," from Rose's mother.

"It was this way. I was in front of here and so was he, waiting for his mother. She was visiting some one. And I told him he was a big liar when he said his father was old Abe. And he said for me to come and see for myself and so I did, mother."

"Did you tell the little boy or any of them who you are?" asked her mother.

"No! No! I'm ashamed to tell that," replied Rose, flushing.

Her mother moved the little desk to the window ledge and drew Rose to sit on her lap. "My dear little daughter," she said gently, "you don't understand yet that I'm proud to be here. I did our glorious Confederacy a great service and our enemies imprisoned me for it. But you mustn't forget that while they scorn me in Washington they love me in Richmond. And that the Confederate President, a greater man than that

dreadful ogre in the White House"-Rose wiggled uncomfortably-"has written me a letter thanking me for striking a great blow for liberty We refuse to be tyrannized over by this Northern scum."

"Tad's not scum, mother, really. Even his goat's nice."

"Hush, Rose! Now tell me, did you really see Abe Lincoln?"

Rose nodded. "I saw him and a man with a beard and a voice like our old bull was there, and Mr. Lincoln was just going to hug me when the old bull bellowed like anything."

"Why did he bellow?" smoothing the child's beautiful hair. "Try to tell me exactly, Rose dear."

The little girl relaxed as she saw the expression of eager interest on her mother's face.

"Because he wanted to talk about the war and Mr. Lincoln was busy telling me I'm pretty. And the bearded man said if the President wanted to talk to him he'd have to come to his office where there weren't any children."

"That must be old Stanton, the War Secretary," said her mother. "What did old Abe say to that sauce?"

"He said," the child scowled in an effort of

memory, "that somebody was to go help take Richmond. And they was to go on they own legs, not on water."

"Who was to go, dear? Try to recall the name." The child, her mind turned inward, did not observe the burning eagerness of her mother's eyes.

"What's the name of that place where Uncle Jim got killed licking the Yanks, last winter?" asked Rose.

"Fredericksburg! Was the man's name General McDowell?"

"Yes! And that's all. We went to play with the goat then," the child nodded.

Her mother clapped her hands. "Glorious! Glorious! Now listen, little daughter. Don't you want to help Mr. Jefferson Davis too!"

"Yes," replied Rose. "He's kind to children just like Tad's father is."

Her mother winced but let it pass. "If you help him, you help me. If I can send some news to him that will help him lick the Yankees, he can come and get me out of prison and take us back to Richmond, where we can be happy together."

The child sat with wide gaze on her mother, absorbing this idea.

"You, just a little girl like you, have a won-

derful chance to end this awful war, dear. All you have to do is play round Tad's father and tell me all you hear. I can do the rest."

"You mean you'll let me like old Abe?" in-

credulously.

Rose's mother was thoughtful, then she said, "I can bear even that. Go up to the White House every day, play nicely with the little boy and don't let them know who I am nor where I am."

"Well," sighed Rose, her dimple showing, "for once I don't mind doing what I'm told."

Thus Tad, driving day Nannie over the gravel walks of the garden early the next morning met Rose, all smiles.

"I made your father a present, last night," she announced, displaying in the palm of her fine, small hand a pocket pin ball shaped like a boot.

Tad tied day Nannie to the iron fence rail which she immediately began to chew on in a meditative way. "He loves pwesents. Let's go up now."

The same gray suit. The same tired face. The same lovely smile. He looked down at the pin ball in his wide palm. "This for me from a little Secessionist? I wish I could woo them all

#### MARY TODD LINCOLN

as easily as I have you, little Rose." He drew her to him and kissed her cheek. "What are you two little rare ripes going to do this morning?"

"Take a dwive with you," replied Tad

promptly. "That is, if you go on one."

"I may go out to inspect hospitals," said his father. "You may go if you're around. But I can't promise to hunt you up."

"We'll play sentwy out in the hall and watch

fo' you," said Tad.

His father slipped the pin ball into his vest pocket, nodded absent-mindedly and turned to his desk.

The sentry play in the hall was changed to a game invented by Rose: hunt the Indian. It was a glorious game requiring the noiseless pursuit of one another on hands and knees or flat on one's little belly, regardless of bagging Zouave pants or a crinoline that arched like the top of an army ambulance. The hound dogs didn't like it because they gave the hiding places away with snorts and barks of delight and had to be locked up. Down the halls, under chairs and tables, through the reception rooms and the President's office, into the private secretary's sanctum—Nicolay shooed them out of that—and into the President's room where Rose hid

under a sofa until Tad pulled her out by the ankle. A wonderful game! So absorbing that most of the time Rose forgot her mother's orders. But not all the time.

They did not get their ride. Tad's mother put a stop to that. The carriage had to be used to send Aunty and Miss L. L. B. somewhere. And, anyhow, she said, looking at Rose with a smile, that this little girl's mother might be worried about her; perhaps the little girl had better not come again until the mothers had met. This "perhaps" was uttered in the sitting room, adjacent to the President's office. Tad, who had stood up well under the loss of the ride, uttered a howl at the "perhaps" that set his two hound dogs to barking. Also Aunty entered the room in such an obvious state of indignant hurt that Tad's mother hurriedly said to let it go for a few days and the children went on with the game.

A few days later, Tad, wandering into his father's bedroom across from his own to say good-night, found both his parents standing with worried expressions beside the open window.

"But I thought General Banks," his mother was saying, "was quite well able to keep Stonewall Jackson from bothering any one seriously."

"So he was, if Stonewall Jackson hadn't

found out somehow that part of Banks' men were going with McDowell to work on Richmond," replied his father. "With that knowledge, Jackson's rushing up the Shenandoah valley to attack Banks. I reckon Banks can handle him though, especially as I've called Frémont over from West Virginia to help him. If nobody seriously interferes with McDowell's joining McClellan, we'll take Richmond this Spring and the rebellion's back is broken."

"What'll you do with old Jeff Davis?" asked

Tad, swarming up his father's back.

"Oh, I'll turn him over to you and Wose," replied his father, kissing the boy repeatedly. "A little Yank and a little Web ought to work out something pretty fair for that gentleman."

"Is Stonewall Jackson your worst enemy at the moment?" asked Tad's mother, eyeing her husband's face with the tender anxiety she nearly always wore nowadays when she looked at him.

"Well, yes. His 'swifts' and McClellan's 'slows' are serious worries for the Union, I can tell you, Mary." He swung Tad around to his shoulders and started for the boy's bedroom.

Tad's mother followed. "Tad must take his tonic. Just how serious, Abr'am?"

He peered at her over Tad's knees. "The decision of whether we'll have a short or a long war will be made in the next few days; whether we'll lose a few hundred or many thousands of poor fellows."

Tad went to sleep thinking of this last statement. After Bull Run and after Antietam and Fredericksburg, last year, there had been a bloody path up Seventh Street from the wharf and up Fifteenth Street from Long Bridge made by ambulances carrying the wounded to Washington hospitals. It was fascinating and horrible to watch the blood drip, drip. The mules' fetlocks were gummy black with it—Tad began to cry into his pillow.

He told Rose the next day that his father was going to catch Stonewall Jackson and make him stop the war. Rose sniffed and said that the Yanks couldn't catch Stonewall Jackson any easier than Tad could catch her. As she spoke she slid under Tad's bed and disappeared. Tad whooped with delight and excitement. The game was on.

Creeping along the dark private passage which led from the sitting room to the President's office, he caught sight of a bit of black dimity protruding from behind the great war

map that had been hung across an unused doorway. Rose's crinoline was always her weak point in this game. He lay very still, wondering how to reach her unnoticed. Mr. Stanton again was talking to his father and would be sure to call attention to a small boy's manœuvering. The mentioning of Stonewall Jackson's name by his father brought him out of his affairs for a moment.

"A force of Rebels of about 15,000 in front of Fredericksburg broke up Saturday night and went we know not where. If they are able to reënforce Stonewall Jackson, who is said to have 20,000, then Banks is in real peril. Is that the worst you have for me, this morning, Mr. Stanton?"

"No! No!" Stanton's voice shook. "Jackson fell on Banks' depleted forces yesterday at Front Royal and licked hell out of them. At present, it's a race to see whether or not he can retreat into Winchester faster than Jackson can drive him there. And McClellan sits before Richmond doing nothing but yell for more men. If the Rebels take Washington, McClellan's to blame. We've actually placed this city in jeopardy to allay his cowardice. Why doesn't

he fight with what he has—double the Rebels' force?"

Tad watched his father anxiously. The tired face suddenly was flushed. "This never could have happened had Frémont obeyed my explicit orders!" he cried. "We shall have to call Mc-Dowell off the Richmond expedition to go to Banks' aid-" He paced the floor, ran his fingers through his black hair till it stood on end, then took his place before the war map. "You must recall McDowell. Have him send 20,000 men to Banks. You must have him send a force here," a long finger on the map, "and here and here, sufficient to draw Stonewall Jackson back. So disposed they can capture him and his entire force. It can be done if," very emphatically, "no one, not even your and my secretaries, knows that the movement is planned. Thus we can turn what threatens to be a catastrophe into the decisive blow at the Rebels."

"You're right,—quite right!" ejaculated Stanton. "I'll do the telegraphing myself. You write your orders and I'll send them with mine."

"I'll bring them to your office myself, within an hour," said Tad's father.

#### MARY TODD LINCOLN

Stanton hurried out. A group of men in long black coats came in. Tad crept unnoted around the wall and pinched Rose's leg behind the war map.

A little later, Tad's mother took them for a long drive out to the Soldiers' Home where they were to have a cottage for the summer. She questioned Rose about herself until the little girl in her struggle to conceal her identity began to cry. Then Tad's mother petted her and sang funny songs until they both were hugging her in fits of laughter.

When they returned from this trip, Tad's mother sent them to bring his father to tea in the sitting room. He was, remarkable to relate, alone in his office. He pulled both children to his knees and enquired in a ferocious voice which one required to be eaten first. Then without waiting for a decision he began to gnaw at Rose's dimity elbow while she shrieked with joy. In the midst of this, John Hay came rushing in.

"General Banks' army's in complete rout! They're trying to cross the Potomac before the Rebels do. It looks as if Washington really is in serious danger." His eyes were blazing.

Tad's father leaned his head for a moment

against Rose's little shoulder and the children heard him whisper, "Almighty God, give me wisdom, wisdom!"

Rose touched his cheek gently with her delicate fingers, then with a queer little sound like a puppy's whine, slid from his knee and went home.

Even had Tad not heard these various bits of talk, he would have known by the anxious looks about the White House, the next morning that all his father's and Stanton's plans had failed. It was a beautiful day of sunshine but the house felt as if there were a dreadful thunderstorm raging. After breakfast Tad couldn't stand it another minute. He went out to the pop stand on Fifteenth Street to cheer himself.

Dust lay deep on everything. The ruts in the street were simply magnificent but they were almost obscured by its yellow drifts. And down the middle, as he could see through the jolting lines of gun carriages, army supply wagons, and —yes, of course, ambulances, ran a broad red path of blood. He was staring at this, his mouth full of taffy, which somehow he couldn't swallow, when Rose joined him. He pointed the red line out to her and spit out the candy to say:

"If papa day sees that he'll cwy. I hope he

won't go out of the house to-day. Lots of days he don't. I wish old Stonewall Jackson could get took and end the wa'."

"If the Yanks took Stonewall Jackson or Robert E. Lee or Mr. Jefferson Davis, they'd lynch 'em, my mother says." Rose spoke in a hesitating manner, as if she were beginning to doubt some of her mother's facts about the Yankees.

"Papa day says if they took Jeff Davis, he'd let you and me have the say about him," said Tad.

"Then we'd let him go," emphatically from Rose.

Tad gave this long thought, then said: "We would if he'd agwee to stop fighting. Let's not play in the house, to-day. Let's stay in the garden."

Rose nodded, then shook her head reluctantly. "I reckon we'd better stay in the house where it's cool."

They wrangled on this for some time and were shricking hard names at each other when Tad's father came upon them. He gave them an amused glance, got a newspaper from the pop-stand man, then eyed the jumble of mule teams and marching soldiers in the street. Tad

suddenly stopped quarreling with Rose and seizing his father's hand tried to jerk him away. Rose with a quick look of intelligence asked him to observe her new shoes. He turned as she bade him but looked with sick eyes on the small feet. Rose suddenly clasped his clenched hand to her little breast and began to sob.

Tad stamped his foot. "I neva' did see such a place as Washington," he scolded. "Somebody's always boo-hooing. Cwy baby!"

"Who's crying?" demanded Rose. "Anyway, I can beat you running," and she was off like an army courier.

Tad caught her upstairs in the public hall. They both were drawing pictures at the Cabinet table when Tad's father came in. He did not look at the children but dropped into his seat before the pigeon-holed desk and stared at his hands knotted on the blotter before him.

"What's the matter, Tad?" whispered Rose.

"Old Stonewall Jackson's got away and now about a million men will have to die. Somebody told Stonewall what papa day planned and he got away."

Rose, blue eyes on the still, agonized face before the desk, wrung her hands. "Does he feel that bad about it?" she murmured.

"He feels worse than that," whispered Tad.

The little girl sat for what seemed to Tad an endless length of time, watching his father. At last, without a word or a sound, she ran from the room. Tad, after a moment of resentful surprise, followed her and the two hound dogs followed Tad. He followed her all the way to the Old Capitol Prison, wondering why she was always hanging round that place. Just as he entered the little park, he saw her speak to the guard and disappear through the door.

"If she can, I can!" panted Tad as he rushed up the steps. But the guard, laughing, barred

the door with his gun.

"I can if that gal can!" shouted Tad.

"That gal went to see her mother, and I reckon your mother'll never be shut up here in spite of all of some folks' whispering," declared the guard stoutly.

Tad's anger changed to surprise. "Is Wose's motha' in hea'?"

"She is! She's Mrs. Greenhow, the woman that sent the message to the Rebels last year that gave 'em warning of the Battle of Bull Run, so's we lost. They say she got old Stonewall Jackson the job there."

Tad blinked and backed slowly down the steps

to seat himself on the bench. What would his mother say if she discovered he was playing with a spy's daughter? Still, she didn't seem to have hated Aunty or Miss L. L. B. Perhaps she wouldn't care what Rose's mother was as long as Rose was nice. His father wouldn't care. That was sure. Rose didn't have to be bad to play with just because her mother was a spy. He thought he'd like to see Rose's mother and judge for himself what his own mother might think of her. He charged up the steps like a naval tug but the guard caught his arm.

"None of that, my boy!" he said crossly.
"I want to play with Wose!" shouted Tad.

"Well, you can't play with Wose. She's about as safe for the President's son to play with as a can of powder." The guard's voice was grim.

But Tad was inured to grim voices. "She plays with me evewy single day at my house and with my fatha' and motha' too. They like he' and so do I." He shrilled this indignantly. "We didn't know who he' old motha' was. But anyhow, my motha' and fatha' don't mind spies. We have lots of 'em awound."

"Whereabouts at your house does she play?" asked the guard in a strange voice.

"Wight up in papa day's office. So!" tri-

umphantly.

"Humph! Good gosh! Guess I've been making a slip!" ejaculated the soldier. "You run along home, Tad. You can't come in here if you wait a week."

Tad swung his foot and studied the guard's face. It bore the same expression as did his mother's when she said "because." One step at a time he descended to the gravel path, half minded to put out his tongue at the guard but fearing it might prejudice his next interview, he called to the hound dogs and snailed home for a drive with day Nannie.

Rose, rushing into her mother's room, after her interview with the matron, saw Tad's little retreating figure from the window above the young magnolia.

Mrs. Greenhow, who was tatting this time, looked up with a smile. "Well, little daughter!"

Rose ran to her mother's knee, her throat working. "Mother, I can't do it any more. It makes him feel too bad."

"Him? Whom?" asked her mother soberly.

"Tad's father. His face— Oh, mother, his face, his face!"

Mrs. Greenhow laid aside her tatting and took

both the child's fluttering hands in hers. "Tell me quietly, dear."

Rose tried to tell her; tried to put into words the look in the eyes of Tad's father and to a degree succeeded, for Mrs. Greenhow patted the little hands tenderly as she listened and her face was not triumphant but infinitely sad as she said:

"Yes! Yes! He must suffer! But he ought to suffer for bringing this war on the South."

Rose screamed her reply to this into her mother's face. "He didn't! He couldn't! he wouldn't kill a louse. I won't tell any more. I love him and I love Tad's mother and I love Tad. I'm going up there and play and not listen to nothing, never."

"Hush! Hush! You'll feel better when you've had your dinner, dear!"

"I won't, mother! I'll never feel better. Anyhow, if they catch old Jeff Davis—"

"Rose! Mr. Jefferson Davis!"

"Yes, him. If they catch him, Tad's father'll give him to Tad and to me, and we'll let him go, so there! I don't need to tell any more, do I, mother?"

"Oh, Rose! Rose! I'm afraid you'll have to!

This is our task, our God-sent duty. I loathe it but I must make you obey me in this."

Rose stamped her foot. "I won't! I can't!" she cried and ran from the room.

And the guard refused to let her run after Tad. In fact, he refused to allow her to go out of the prison at all.

Tad was unable to get into his father's office that evening for his good-night romp because Colonel Baker, the police detective, was locked in there with his father and mother. Tad wandered into his own room and hung out of the window gazing at the stars and guessing on which one Willie now lived with God. By and by he put himself to bed.

At the end of the gloomy breakfast the next morning, his mother said very gently, "Taddie, your little friend Rose will not be here to play any more."

"I didn't know he' motha' was a spy till the gua'd told me yestaday," explained Tad anxiously. "Anyhow, Wose is nice."

"Rose is not safe, however nice she may be," his mother's voice was firm.

His father groaned. "Must you tell him, Mary?"

Her beautiful blue eyes filled with tears but

she said, "I must, Abr'am, so that he'll understand once and for all that he must not bring strange children into this house. I feel horribly culpable myself but I've had my lesson and although no one can blame blessed little Taddie, he must learn too. But you have enough trouble. Don't you listen. If you're through eating, just go along."

"You're the best wife a man ever had," said Tad's father. He kissed them both and went out.

Very carefully and clearly his mother explained to the little boy what it was believed Mrs. Greenhow had gotten from Rose's visits to the White House.

Tad grew as pale as his little white linen roundabout. "What will they do to Wose?" he gasped.

"She is not to be punished for she was helpless in her mother's hands. Her mother—well, you run up to your lessons, Taddie," rising from the table.

"But what will they do to he' motha'?" he insisted.

"That remains to be seen." Then with sudden explosive wrath, "They should shoot her! Come, Tad, come!"

### MARY TODD LINCOLN

He obeyed, clinging to his mother's hand as to one of the few trustable facts in a reeling world.

But he did not at once settle to his studies. When they reached the sitting room Rose was standing by the center table. Her black skirts were torn, her hair was wild, she was trembling visibly. Still, it was Rose.

"How did you get here?" demanded Tad's

mother, sharply.

"While mother was asleep, I climbed out the window and dropped into a little magnolia tree," replied Rose. "I had to come! I had to come to tell Tad's father that I didn't know—" drawing a long quivering breath and twisting delicate fingers.

"You must have known," insisted Tad's mother, sternly. She was keeping Tad close beside her as she stood before the door.

"I mean I didn't know what he was like or how it would make him feel. I went home yesterday morning and told her I wouldn't do it any more. And now—" Rose clutched her bright hair, the most pitiful sight in the world—a child beyond tears.

It must have seemed so to Tad's mother for she dropped his hand, hurried across the room in

her many-ruffled muslin and sinking to the ottoman, swept Rose into her arms.

"Tad, you go fetch your father!"

Tad burst into the President's office, shoved Nicolay and his tray of telegrams aside and seized his father's hand.

"Wose is hea'. Motha' says come quick. Wose!"

"I'll be back shortly, Nicolay. Get the message off to McClellan."

A moment later, Rose, still quivering so terribly in Tad's mother's lap, was making her little apology to him. Tad's father, walking slowly up and down the room, shook his head, his cheeks twitching. Tad tried to keep step with him and the hound dogs followed, up and down, up and down the rich Brussels carpet with its design of upset baskets of roses.

When Rose had finished, Tad cried, "Papa day, don't let them shoot Wose's motha'. They didn't shoot Aunty or Miss L. L. B."

His father looked down at him. "Jings, Tad! Even you should see there's a difference between a drib of quinine and the lives of thousands of men,—Union and Rebel both, poor fellows!"

#### MARY TODD LINCOLN

"Quick, Abr'am, help me!" exclaimed Tad's mother.

Rose had fainted in her arms.

Tad's father carried the little girl to a sofa, the yellow hair tangling on his snuff-colored sleeve. Then he fanned her with a crocheted tidy he jerked from the back of a chair while Tad's mother rushed to her room and came back with a green bottle of smelling salts and Tad fetched water in his toothbrush mug.

As they ministered to Rose, Tad's mother said: "You could reprieve Mrs. Greenhow, somehow, couldn't you, Abr'am and still be safe from her? Won't you see her and talk with her?"

"I never want to lay eyes on the woman," replied Tad's father. "Baker and Stanton are frothing at the mouth over this and I don't blame them."

"Nor do I," agreed Tad's mother, sadly, "but perhaps she wasn't the only spy on that job and our spies are working down among the Rebels—and we were all so carcless in this case, so criminally careless!—Tad, you ring for James to bring some hot oatmeal porridge and a glass of milk. There! There, dear! You're feeling



MRS. GREENHOW AND HER DAUGHTER



Nothing was said while Rose swallowed the food which Tad's mother fed to her. Tad paced the floor with his father, not daring to speak as he watched the close-pressed lips.

When Rose was standing again on less uncertain slender legs in their wrinkled pantalettes, Tad's father paused before her and lifted her chin so that her eyes looked straight into his.

"Rose," he said, "I'm going to give you a message for your mother. Tell her she's to give me her promise in proper form to spy no more. She's then to be sent down to Richmond with you, and she's to promise not to leave there till this war shall end. Tell her I'm doing it simply because God knows there are already too many orphans that she and Jeff Davis and I have helped to make and that I can't bring myself to add this new one to the list. Repeat this to me till you know it, Rose."

When she was letter-perfect, he stooped and kissed her, then turned to his wife. "Mary, I reckon you'd better have James take this little rare ripe back to the Old Capitol in the carriage."

Rose stared at Tad's father, then at his mother,

#### MARY TODD LINCOLN

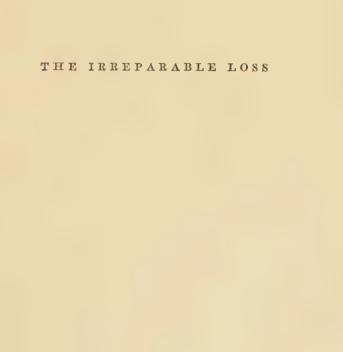
then at Tad. She did not speak. She was still trembling visibly when James led her from the room.

Tad's father suddenly heaved a great sigh and grinned down at him.

"Let's go out and treat ourselves to ginger pop, eh, Taddie darling?"

Tad with the feeling that a terrible lump had suddenly left his throat and that all the red birds in the world were singing in the garden, gave an ecstatic skip and took his father's hand. At the door he looked back to say, "We'll bwing you some, motha'."

"You needn't bother," returned his mother with a little smile. "I've had my treat."





You will have observed, that as I previously admitted, Tad ran away with the story. But his mother was there. As I sweated over the background of the account, Mary Todd, smiling at me a little sadly but with humor as though she found my efforts well meant but amusing, moved out of the background into my line of vision, which she never was or is to leave. So it was with renewed vitality that I continued the biography and took up another angle of Mary's weaknesses, a real one, this time.

It is grotesque to contemplate the fact that while the gossips were so busy with lies about the President's wife, she was committing herself to a foolhardy course that, had they discovered it (and it was easily discoverable) would have been most unctuous on their tongues.

When Mary Lincoln became Mistress of the White House, every temptation imaginable was brought to bear on her love of beauty and finery. As soon as she reached Washington, the tradespeople of that city and of New York besieged her to open accounts with them, offering what

seemed like unlimited credit. Shopkeepers camped on her doorstep, haunted her footsteps, urging dress fabrics, furs, jewelry and objets d'art upon her consideration. Job hunters and political panderers filled the White House with gifts for Mrs. Lincoln and the little boys. And Mary lost her head. She opened accounts in the shops of Washington and New York. She took on a fashionable dressmaker, an ex-slave named Elizabeth Keckley and plunged into an orgy of dressmaking that continued for four years.

Lincoln had nothing, desired nothing to do with the family finances. He turned his earnings over to his wife and in Springfield she had managed thriftily. But \$25,000 a year! Yes, poor Mary lost her head.

The President's salary was adequate for everything but his wife's wardrobe. After a couple of years, bills began to bother Mary. She ignored them. Finally one of her New York creditors threatened to sue her. She would rather have died than have her husband learn the extent of her extravagance. In fact, she did not learn this herself until the creditors frightened her. Then she gathered the bills together, added them up, and took to her bed.

Mrs. Keckley was an intelligent woman, who

appears to have developed a real understanding of the President's wife, and a real affection and admiration with it. She realized that her mistress was sick with anxiety and gradually got the story. The dressmaker's report makes one wince a little. She said that Mrs. Lincoln asked her if she thought Mr. Lincoln would be reelected, adding:

"If he should be defeated, I do not know what would become of us all. To me, to him, there is more at stake in this election than he dreams of."

"What can you mean, Mrs. Lincoln? I do not comprehend."

"Simply this. I have contracted large debts, of which he knows nothing and which he will be unable to pay if he is defeated."

"What are your debts, Mrs. Lincoln?"

"They consist chiefly of store bills. I owe altogether about twenty-seven thousand dollars; the principal portion at Stewart's in New York. You understand, 'Lizabeth, that Mr. Lincoln has but little idea of the expense of a woman's wardrobe. He glances at my rich dresses, and is happy in the belief that the few hundred dollars that I obtain from him supply all my wants. I must dress in costly materials. The people

scrutinize every article that I wear with critical curiosity. The very fact of having grown up in the West subjects me to more searching observation. To keep up appearances, I must have money—more than Mr. Lincoln can spare for me. He is too honest to make a penny outside of his salary; consequently I had and still have no alternative but to run in debt."

Lizzie appears not to have shown any sense of shock and she later made an astute suggestion: that Mary should tell the creditors that if her husband were reëlected she'd pay them back on the installment plan from his salary. If he were not reelected, his legal fees in his new practice would be adequate to pay all debts.

In April came the irreparable loss to Mary and the nation,—Lincoln was assassinated. The shock put Mary to bed for five weeks. Lizzie Keckley took care of her. She would see no one else save Bob and Tad. When she was at last able to creep about she began the preparations for leaving the White House.

All of us who have had to do with death will understand Mary's state of mind when she utterly refused to enter her dead husband's bedroom, when she could not bear to see his clothing. She told Lizzie Keckley to gather Lin-

coln's clothes together and give them away. One or two mementos she disposed of herself. She could not bear to see Charles Sumner, although he called on her several times after the President's death. But she sent him, before she left Washington, two souvenirs of her husband, one, a likeness of John Bright, which Lincoln had said he "prized as representing so noble and good a friend to our cause," and the other, the President's cane, with this note:

"Executive Mansion, "Tuesday morning, May 9, 1865.

"My dear Mr. Summer:—Your unwavering kindness to my idolized husband and the great regard he entertained for you, prompts me to offer for your acceptance, this simple relic which, being connected with his blessed memory, I am sure you will prize. I am endeavoring to regain my strength sufficiently to leave here in a few days. I go hence, brokenhearted, with every hope almost in life crushed. Notwithstanding my utter desolation through life, the cherished friend of my husband and myself will always be gratefully remembered. With kindest regards, I remain always, yours very truly, Mary Lincoln."

Combined with her great grief was the scalding consciousness of her enormous debts. She was wild with apprehension lest some one get wind of them. She had no one in whom, in her shame and chagrin, she dared to confide, save the faithful Lizzie Keckley. Lizzie was all sympathy and when Mary stated that the clothing and jewelry, with the objets d'art she had accumulated, might as a last resort be sold to pay the debts, Lizzie approved and offered her help in the disposal of them.

With this idea in mind, Mary determined to take back to Chicago with her, every scrap of personal adornment belonging to her. Of household furnishings she took not one stick, save a little dressing stand used by the President. He had been very fond of it and had once told his wife that if the Commissioner would consent to their putting another stand in its place, he'd like to take it back to Springfield with him. After his death, Mary obtained the Commissioner's consent to the exchange and the little table was sent to Chicago for Taddie to use.

The packing, under Lizzie Keckley's supervision, was a helter-skelter affair. The Government sent an enormous number of packing cases, fifty or sixty of them, and every one of them was

used. Mary, obsessed with her fear of bank-ruptcy, ordered that every personal article be packed. So even discarded bonnets she had brought from Springfield were put into the boxes. Sometimes, with the inane extravagance of servants, a whole box contained but one bonnet. The presents that she and the children had received, elaborate furs, toys, pictures, books, statuary, wax wreaths, hunting trophies, all went into the packing cases, to be stored in Chicago until such time as the settlement of her husband's estate told her whether or not they must be sold.

Late in May, 1865, Mary Lincoln in a widow's bonnet, with a great black gauze veil that fell to the hem of her enormous black silk skirt, accompanied by twelve-year-old Tad in a black roundabout and black velvet cap, and by Robert who had just left Grant's staff, boarded a Baltimore & Ohio train for Chicago and for a little while the gossips forgot her.

Her means were very much hampered. Congress, at the time of Lincoln's death, allotted her \$22,000, the sum remaining of the current year's salary. Mary used \$3,000 of this to clear up domestic bills in Washington. She bought a little house in Chicago for which she paid \$2,700. She

made a substantial payment on her debts and with the residuum, prepared to carry herself and the boys until the estate should be settled.

Robert went into a law office in Chicago. Mary secluded herself and gave herself to Taddie's training which had been neglected. He had an impediment in his speech which, with the ingenuity of a small boy, he had used to ward off any very effectual attempts to educate him. He was a bright, loyable youngster, and for a time Mary found a very tender comfort in devoting herself to him.

But there was a long delay in the settlement of Lincoln's estate. Her money dwindled and dwindled and in the spring of 1867 Lizzie Keckley received a letter from Mrs. Lincoln:

"I have not the means," she wrote, "to meet the expenses of even a first-class boarding house and must sell out and secure some cheap rooms at some place in the country. It will not be startling news to you, dear Lizzie, to learn that I must sell a portion of my wardrobe to add to my resources so as to enable me to live decently for you remember what I told you in Washington as well as what you understood before you left me here in Chicago. I cannot live on \$1,700 a year, and as I have many costly things which I shall never wear I might as well turn them into money and thus add to my income and make my circumstances easier. It is humiliating to be placed in such a position, but as I am in the position I may as well extricate myself as best I can. Now, Lizzie, I want to ask a favor of you. It is imperative that I do something for my relief and I want you to meet me in New York between the 30th of August and the 5th of September to assist me in disposing of a portion of my wardrobe."

So, heavily veiled, Mary Todd Lincoln, late in September, 1867, registered as Mrs. Clarke at the St. Denis Hotel in New York and waited for Lizzie to appear. The manager of the hotel looked with suspicion on the heavily-veiled widow and when a colored woman, also veiled, arrived and asked for Mrs. Clarke, he treated her so shabbily that Mary was outraged. She told the manager what she thought of him, bundled Lizzie and herself into a cab and drove up to the Union Place Hotel.

Having with much fluttering settled themselves, the two women sallied forth into Union Square, bought newspapers, and began to seek a place to sell their wares.

They finally determined to try the firm of W.

H. Brady and Company, of 609 Broadway. Still veiled, with Lizzie carrying the jewelry, Mary presented herself at this place of business and asked to see a member of the firm. She was introduced to a Mr. Keyes, who undertook to appraise the jewelry for her. It seemed to Mary that the scheme was working splendidly, when Keyes looked up from the ring he was holding under a magnifying glass and said to her abruptly:

"You are Mrs. Lincoln! Your name is in

this ring."

Startled and troubled, Mary admitted her identity but begged Keyes to keep her secret. He agreed to do so and asked her to leave the jewelry for his partner to examine. He was sure they could be of real help to this distinguished patron. Much cheered, Mary returned to the hotel and there, a little later, Mr. Keyes followed her, not with a proffer of money but with a scheme. He urged Mary to allow him to use some discreet publicity in connection with her belongings. He declared that if she would permit him to do so, he could raise \$100,000 for her in a few weeks.

Mary refused. She'd been scorched too often by publicity. Keyes told her that an ordinary sale of all that she possessed wouldn't bring her \$10,000 while a public auction would net her ten times that amount.

Deeply distressed, Mary still refused.

"Then," urged Keyes, "allow me to go to some of the leaders of the Republican party and inform them that the wife of Lincoln is in dire need. They are fattening now on the prestige your husband gave the party. They will merely back a movement for raising a public fund. Let it be known that the wife of the Great Emancipator is trying to raise money by selling her clothes and the whole country will rally to you."

He had no idea how sweet his last words were to his hearer. How sweet they were, only one who had witnessed her sufferings in the White House could know. She flung common sense away and gave Keyes the permission he sought.

She wrote at his suggestion several letters making W. H. Brady and Company her agents, harmless and pathetic letters enough, telling of her needy condition and stating that her income when her husband's estate should be settled would give her but \$1,700 a year. You may be sure she made no mention of the debts.

With these letters, Keyes went to several of Lincoln's old associates, Seward, Thurlow Weed, Raymond of the New York Times. These gentlemen refused to have anything to do with the

proposal.

While Keyes was making this preliminary flourish to his next colossal blunder, Mary, fearing recognition, went out on Long Island for a few days. Here she received word from Keves that his efforts with Seward and the others had failed. He recounted to her, also, some of their comments on her White House career. The revival of the old lies upset Mary completely. She flew to her pen and dashed off a note to Keves in which she denounced these several distinguished men in a biting sentence or two that carried back of them all her old years of suffering. Having supplied Keves with priceless material for completely ruining her, she left for Chicago. Keves, still fatuously believing he was starting a campaign that would raise funds for Lincoln's wife, sent all of her letters to the New York World, with the announcement that Mrs. Lincoln's effects were on view at 607 Broadway.

The World first published one of Mary's letters as follows:

"Mr. Brady, Commission Broker, 609 Broadway, N. Y .: —I have this day sent to you per-

#### THE IRREPARABLE LOSS

sonal property which I am compelled to part with and which you will find of considerable value. The articles consist of four camel's hair shawls, one lace dress and shawl, a parasol cover, a diamond ring, two dress patterns, some furs, etc.

"Please have them appraised and confer by letter with me.

"Very respectfully,
"Mrs. Lincoln."

The New York World, October 3, 1867—"The announcement already has been made in these columns that Mrs. Abraham Lincoln, widow of the late President, was compelled to dispose of some of her personal effects in order to eke out the slender income which remained after the settlement of her husband's estate and that she was in fact in this city under the name of Mrs. Clarke for the purpose of superintending the sale of her property. As Mrs. Lincoln is no longer anxious to withhold from the public the facts in the case there can be no impropriety in imparting further information upon the subject as obtained from the lady herself.

"Upon the death of Mr. Lincoln an effort was made to appropriate for his wife and children the sum that would have been received had he lived to finish his second term of office, to wit, \$100,000, but it resulted in appropriating but \$22,000, the amount remaining of the current year's salary as President. Of this sum, \$3,000 were required to discharge certain standing obligations leaving about \$19,000 which with the house and lot in Springfield owned by Mr. Lincoln previous to 1860 was all the property that fell to Mrs. Lincoln." The paper then goes on to quote from a bitter letter from Mrs. Lincoln in which she says that certain men of the Republican party, such as Thurlow Weed, Henry J. Raymond, Wm. H. Seward and others, used their influence to quash the plan proposed by the Tribune to raise a fund for her by voluntary subscription of the people. And on October 5 the hounds took up the scent so foolishly and weakly dropped by Mary Lincoln.

Rochester Democrat, October 5, 1867—"Mrs. Lincoln, the widow of the murdered President, has made an exhibition of herself through the columns of the N. Y. World, which we are sorry to see for her sake and the sake of her family. Her fling at the three Republicans is probably an ebullition of female spite. Her letters are coarse and vulgar. From their publication a

refined woman would have shrunk with horror. Her conduct during her husband's life was not such as to commend her to the public favor. She says these things were the gifts of friends. We do not believe it. She has lavished the money given her by the nation on diamonds, furs and lace."

Albany Journal, October 5.—"By this act Mrs. Lincoln had dishonored herself, her country and the memory of her lamented husband. It is impossible to think without chagrin and mortification of the criticism that will be cast upon our character abroad."

Pittsburgh Commercial, October 6.—"The conclusion to be drawn is that Mrs. Lincoln, whose judgment and taste have never been rated high, has been beset and prompted by cruel and unscrupulous advisers in the interest of the Democratic party that they might have the dénouement to publish on the eve of the fall elections. Mrs. Lincoln certainly should be able to live on \$1,700 a year."

Cleveland *Herald*, October 6.—"It has been believed that charity and oblivion were the cloaks that should cover Mrs. Lincoln's career as mistress of the White House, and a generous

public has been willing such should be the case—but now let the scalpel of investigation cut where it may. A lady whose early life was one of very simple indulgences raised suddenly to the possession of an income of \$1,700 a year with a profusion of laces, diamonds and shawls valued at \$20,000 cannot complain when plain people wonder at her extravagance. Let the country know that it required \$100,000 to make good the spoliation at the White House and let it be proved who had the benefit of such plundering."

Philadelphia Evening Telegraph, October 1.

—"How had Mrs. Lincoln managed to squander the \$25,000 voted her by Congress in less

than two years?"

Boston Post, October 8.—"Mrs. Lincoln appeals to party leaders in New York and they turn a deaf ear to her. The subscription which they engineered and raised for her after her husband's death was basely turned into the party electioneering fund and now they mock her appeal for relief after having kept back what was hers long ago. Such revelations of ingratitude and selfishness are unpleasant to read but we hope the lady will go on and write out the chapter—even in the little points of decency this 'party of great moral ideas' is going to pieces."

Norwich (Conn.) Advertiser. October 6.-"The sale of Mrs. Lincoln's spare clothing brings out that the goods for sale were presents by Republican office seekers to secure the potent influence of Mrs. Lincoln with her 'late lamented' in procurement of office contracts and cotton permits. There is a nasty history connected with the Lincolnsonian occupancy of the White House that will come out some day.

Hartford Evening Press, October 7 .- "Before the wife of Lincoln ever dreamed of going to the White House she was a terror to the village of Springfield where she lived, and the eccentricities of Anne Todd, as she was always called, were common talk. The patient Mr. Lincoln was a second Socrates within his own dwelling. The exhibition she has recently made of herself surprises no one."

Letter of Thurlow Weed to the Commercial Advertiser. New York, October 4.-After accusing Mrs. Lincoln of studied insolence and indifference to the President's friend, he states that she falsified a bill sent to the State Department for entertaining Prince Napoleon and closes with the following noble sentiment. "Mrs. Lincoln's propensity to sell things was manifested early and before any necessity was

### MARY TODD LINCOLN

foreseen. If our information is reliable eleven of Mr. Lincoln's new linen shirts were sold before the remains which were enshrouded on the 12th had started for that bourne from which no traveler returns. Individually we are obliged to Mrs. Lincoln for an expression of her ill will. It is pleasant to remember that we always were out of favor in that quarter."

Ohio Statesman, October 8.—"The bitterness and ferocity of the Republican press on Mrs. Lincoln is without a parallel in the history of newspaper warfare.—In her lonely widowed condition without a male protector to defend her from their base assaults, she who but a few years previous was bespattered with all sorts of praise as giving life and character to the White House, as the 'rosy Empress' who won all hearts by her queenly manners is now traduced as if she were a common thief and a disgrace to her sex for heartless, grasping avarice. In this war it is painful to see editors who claim to be governed by decencies of life and to be gentlemen in name if not by nature join in the cry of blackguards and slanderers to traduce the wife of a man whom they profess to be without a peer within the length and breadth of the land. Such things are disgraceful, disgraceful!"

# THE IRREPARABLE LOSS

Chicago Times, October 7.—"As long as Mr. Lincoln was alive and could dispense patronage in the shape of contracts and offices, he was a demigod. After his death, as long as his body could be used to fire the Northern heart against the South and to assist to prepare the public mind for disenfranchisement and severity, so long was it kept above ground and forced into an unseemly, indecent and prolonged exhibition all over the North. The moment his remains were entombed and of no further use, they were forgotten. The effort to erect a monument fitting to his party life and services proved abortive.—So long as Mr. Lincoln was President, Mrs. Lincoln was of use. She could be implored for office.—How she was fêted and courted! How suppliant radicals thronged the levees, flattering her wit, her graces, her intelligence and craving her powerful influence to carry out their purposes! How they overwhelmed her with shawls, laces and diamonds which they assured her were testimonies not to her position but to her worth as a woman. Mr. Lincoln died. Mrs. Lincoln was forced to descend from her pedestal. A little time passed. We find her offering her dresses and jewelry, she says to secure herself against want.-Mrs. Lincoln two years ago-

#### MARY TODD LINCOLN

what a contrast—we discover her now at the pawnbrokers pledging the souvenirs of her greatness. Such is Radicalism! A fawning slave to power but infinitely insolent and intolerant to weakness."

It was not until her train was crossing Indiana, that Mary learned what had happened to her letters. A man who had been sitting beside her left a newspaper in the seat. Mary picked it up. It was a copy of the Springfield (Mass.) Republican. She glanced idly up and down its columns. Then a heavily leaded caption caught her eyes:

"Mrs. Lincoln's Wardrobe For Sale!"

"That dreadful woman, Mrs. Lincoln, who is in the open market with her useless finery will not let people forget her or only remember her as the widow of a beloved patriot but insists on thrusting her repugnant personality before the world to the great mortification of the nation."

The sheet then went on to quote from the New York *World* and the several neighboring papers from which I have quoted above.

Mary read until the last slurring word was burned indelibly into her brain. She was conscious of feeling faint but she dared not ask for aid lest her identity be disclosed. The train pulled into Fort Wayne and the brakeman bawled that twenty minutes would be allowed for supper. She waited until the car was emptied, then she dragged herself into the station for a cup of tea.

The dining room was filled with a gulping crowd. The long table near the packed counter showed but one empty place. Into this slipped Mary. A man at her left offered her bread. There was a familiar look about the huge, beautiful hand that held the platter. She dared not look up but murmured her thanks into her chin. But she could not wholly disguise her voice. The plate was hastily set down and Charles Sumner stooped to look into her face!

"But you!" he exclaimed. "Here! And alone."

Mary had not met the Senator since her husband's death. The sound of that familiar voice, the extraordinary and familiar gentleness of the blue eyes, the whole elegant outline of "this noblest Roman of them all" as Lincoln called him, utterly undid Mary. She rose with a stammered excuse.

"I came out only to get a cup of tea-for-a

friend who is ill," and she fled back to the train.

She cowered in her seat with two thicknesses of veil over her face. Had Sumner read the papers? Undoubtedly! Her old friend who had bridged her over so many moments of agony—now surely he would turn against her at last. "My tongue! My traitor tongue!" she whispered.

The train started but was scarcely out of the station when a cup of tea in a badly slopped saucer was balanced on her knee and Charles

Sumner seated himself beside her.

"I suspected whom the friend might be," he said. "You ate nothing. Let me see you drink the tea."

The touch of kindness was too much. She flung tea, cup and saucer out the open window and buried her face in her hands.

Oblivious to the gaping passengers, quite as though they were alone in the familiar White House sitting room, Sumner laid his hand on her arm and waited for Mary to get control of herself. It did not take her long. She set her teeth. At least she would not make a scene for this last and dearest of her friends. She threw back her veil and smiled up at him. She had a lovely smile.

# THE IRREPARABLE LOSS

"What are you doing in the Middle West, Senator?" she asked.

"I'm on a lecture tour. People are very kind, and you—"

But Mary hastily interrupted. "I received the announcement of your marriage last year and wrote you how glad I was for you, as you may remember. But now I can say to you that it made me happy to know that the thing you had desired so long had come into your life."

Sumner's leonine head drooped and the hand that still lay on Mary's arm trembled. "It was not to be," he said in a low voice. "We parted last month, never to meet again."

"Dear Senator, are you telling me your wife has died?" exclaimed Mary.

"No!—No! Our marriage is broken. I—I cannot talk about it, even to you."

Mary laid her little hand on Sumner's huge one. "Oh, that is trouble, indeed—after all your years of hope! I am so, so sorry!"

There was a little pause, then the Senator said, "And this new contumely that is being heaped upon you?—Where are your friends, your family, dear Mrs. Lincoln, that you should be pushed to such extremities?" He looked

down on her with puzzled and anxious eyes.

She felt her face burn. She bit her lips. Then with enormous effort said, "I have debts I cannot tell my family about—I have been a fool—my tongue, my abominable tongue; I am sick with chagrin at myself. But truly, I do not merit the things they are saying."

"Don't I know that! The wretched cads!—One can only bow the head while the liars empty themselves. When this furor in the papers has been forgotten, you must allow me to apply for a pension for you. You shall hear from me about that. This is my station, I fear."

He rose as he spoke and with a last pressure of his great hand, left the train and Mary went on to face Chicago alone.

Tad met her at the station. Excitement always increased the impediment in his speech. He was fourteen now, tall and with his mother's winning vivacity of manner. He ran down the long platform and gathered her in his arms, stuttering and sobbing. She could make little of what he said, at first, but in the carriage he showed her a rumpled bunch of newspaper clippings. Mary could no more resist reading them than one can resist gazing at the horrors in a museum. Some one had given Tad a copy of

the letter Thurlow Weed had written to the New York Commercial Advertiser.

Mary snatched the clipping and tore it into a dozen pieces while she mingled her tears with Taddie's. She gathered that he was going to take his father's cane and beat to death the editor of every paper that had maligned her. They had reached the house before she extracted from him a promise that he'd do nothing to add to her trouble.

Rob was older and just beginning his sturdy and spotless career. He was utterly devastated by this horrible publicity. It was a pitiful group there in the little house—not really a home, for Mary had been obliged to take in roomers,—a pitiful group; Abraham Lincoln's wife and sons, panic-stricken, wondering where they could hide from the scandalmongers. Bob solved it as far as he was concerned by going out to the Rockies on a hunting trip with his friend, Edgar Welles.

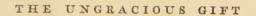
Mary wrote Lizzie Keckley on Sunday morning, October 6:

"My dear Lizzie: I am writing this morning with a broken heart after a sleepless night of great mental suffering. Rob came up last evening like a maniac and almost threatening his life, looking like death because the letters of the

World were published yesterday evening. I could not refrain from weeping when I saw him so miserable. But yet, my dear, good Lizzie, was it not to protect myself and help others—and was not my motive and action of the purest kind? Pray for me that this cup of affliction may pass from me or be sanctified to me.—Only my darling Taddie prevents me from taking my life.—Tell Messrs. Brady and Keyes not to have a line of mine once more in print. I am nearly losing my reason. Your friend, M. L."

"Chicago, Saturday, October 13.—My dear Lizzie: Was ever such cruel newspaper abuse lavished upon an unoffending woman as has been showered upon my defenseless head?—The Springfield Journal had an editorial a few days since with the important information that Mrs. Lincoln had been known to be deranged for years and should be pitied for all her strange acts. I should have been all right if I had allowed them to take possession of the White House.—I am always so anxious to hear from you. I am feeling so friendless in the world.—M. L."

She wrote to Brady and Company, withdrawing her goods and the wretched venture was ended.





### VIII

ARY's means were very much restricted. The executors of her husband's estate still delayed and the famous or infamous \$1,700 was still in the fabled future. For a little while her relatives still held aloof. Then as the newspapers continued to outdo themselves in malignancy, the family's indignation toward Mary was superseded by their indignation toward the news sheets. Mary's sister, Elizabeth, now took a hand. She won from Mary the story of her debts. She brought about a settlement of the estate and arrangements were made to take care of the absurd and awful bills. And in January, accompanied by Taddie, Mary sailed for Europe: that Europe she and Lincoln always had planned to see together. How it hurt her to go without him!

It was not until Mary Lincoln had been in Europe a year that Charles Sumner ventured to bring before the United States Senate the matter of her pension.

It would have been impossible for her to have had a better sponsor for her pension bill. Not only was he a great idealist but, also, he was a superb politician. He had survived the most intricate, the most trying moments of the Senate's history, from 1850 to 1865. If any one was fitted to force that pension bill through it was Sumner. But even he did not foresee the extent of the fight he was to precipitate.

The Senate was full of veterans still racked by the tempests of the Civil War. Scarcely a member could speak of persons or events of that soul-shattering period without a violence that makes ordinary partisanship seem feeble.

The Senate Chamber, Sumner told himself on that snowy February morning, 1869, was more his home than even the house in Boston from which he had buried his father, his mother, his brother and his sister, for here in the Senate Chamber he had spent the supreme hours of his manhood. In that seat yonder, Brooks, the South Carolinian, had beaten him into insensibility and from yonder spot he had made the unparalleled speech for the Emancipation Proclamation. And here, it seemed, he was to plead for common justice to the wife of the author of what he felt to be the greatest document struck off by the hand of man since the Christian era began.

## THE UNGRACIOUS GIFT

In this mood and this attitude of mind, there was no defeating Sumner. But his opponents did not recognize that fact, though they had seen the same mood and attitude raise abolition from a cult to half a nation's religion.

He introduced a bill asking for a pension of \$5,000 with a letter from Mrs. Lincoln to the Vice-president:

"Sir: I herewith most respectfully present to the honorable Senate of the United States an application for a pension. I am a widow of a President of the United States whose life was sacrificed to his country's service. That sad calamity has very much impaired my health and by the advice of my physician I have come over to Germany to try the mineral waters and during the winter to go to Italy. But my financial means do not permit me to take advantage of the advice given me nor can I live in a style becoming to the widow of a Chief Magistrate of a great nation, although I live as economically as I can. In consideration of the great services my deeply lamented husband has rendered to the United States, and of the fearful loss I have sustained by his untimely death, I respectfully submit to your honorable body this petition.

"Mrs. A. Lincoln, Frankfurt, Germany."

After bill and letter had been read there was an uneasy rustle in the Senate Chamber. Senator Edmunds of Vermont sprang to his feet and took a hasty step toward the President's desk. He was a Republican and Chairman of the Pensions Committee.

"I think this is a subject that merits inquiry by a committee. If this lady is not destitute or enjoys affluence or comfort then it may be entirely unjust to give her this sum to the exclusion of the widows of other soldiers. On the contrary, as is represented, I hear within a day or so she is in destitute circumstances and absolutely in want, it would undoubtedly be proper for the Government to do something for her. In that view, I move that the bill be referred to the Committee on Pensions."

This motion caused a heated debate beginning with the question of how much money Mrs. Lincoln actually possessed and including a problem presented by Senator Howell of Iowa:

"I am against such a sneaking fraud on our pension system. Lincoln never was really Commander-in-chief. He performed no service in the field."

### THE UNGRACIOUS GIFT

During the debate, Senator Edmunds demanded of Sumner:

"May I ask the honorable member from Massachusetts why he has fixed on the sum of \$5,000?"

"Certainly," replied Sumner. "\$5,000 was in my mind because that was the salary just voted by the Senate to its members, and \$5,000 is the interest on the \$75,000 Lincoln would have been paid had he not been killed. I hope that this bill may soon be put upon its passage."

Senator Morrell of Vermont spoke loudly: "I am bitterly opposed to such a pension.

I—"

"Mrs. Lincoln was not true to her husband!" shouted Senator Yates of Illinois. "She sympathized with the Rebellion. She is not worthy of our charity."

"Tut! Tut!" This, in a loud groan from Senator Cameron of Pennsylvania, the handsome veteran of many Senate battles.

Sumner, arms folded on his breast, waited, keen eyes watching the line form against him.

Senator Tipton of Nebraska rose. "Mrs. Lincoln's indecent and spectacular effort to sell her clothes lately brought no gestures of sym-

pathy from the tender heart of Illinois. That is proof that Mrs. Lincoln has no actual need of financial help. She has a large income from her late husband's estate. This she is spending in Europe instead of in her native land where it should be spent."

"This is absurd," cried Senator P. Morton of Indiana. "The nation spent a million dollars on Lincoln's funeral. The Congress has just voted \$10,000 for a monument to him. Yet it now grudges a pension to his widow."

Something in this strident sneer stopped the debate and the pension bill was referred to the Pensions Committee, where Edmunds, who hated Mary Lincoln, wished it to go. It would not come out, he assured his friends, until he was certain of its defeat.

His first manœuver was to postpone making a report on the bill. Day after day Sumner rose in his place to make inquiry, but Edmunds was not ready. On May 5, there was a typical passage at arms. Edmunds had reported on other pensions and had come to an end.

Sumner spoke clearly: "Before the reports of the Pensions Committee pass away, I wish to ask my honorable friend when there will be a report on the bill for Mrs. Mary Lincoln?"

## THE UNGRACIOUS GIFT

With a smile of utmost suavity, Senator Edmunds replied, "We are at work on the report and will make it soon."

Sumner returned the smile. "I hope that the bill may soon be put upon its passage."

"We cannot report until we have finished an inquiry into the lady's necessities," said Edmunds.

Trumbull of Illinois looked up from a memorandum he was making. "I don't like your attitude, Senator. I hope the bill will be passed unanimously and graciously."

"It will be passed graciously, if at all," returned Edmunds coolly. "I suggest that we take up the matter of making May 30 a holiday for decorating national cemeteries."

Sumner's great mellow voice suddenly filled the Chamber. Visitors in the gallery craned forward.

"The object of this kindness, this beneficence on the part of the Congress is Abraham Lincoln's wife!"

Edmunds leaped into the aisle. It would never do to allow Sumner to launch himself into a real speech! "I rise to a point of order!"

Some one in the gallery clapped. The Vicepresident pounded on his desk. Sumner gave Edmunds a smile that was at the same moment threatening and keen.

"Very well, sir," said Sumner, "then let us have that report without unnecessary delay."

Sumner was well informed as to what Edmunds was doing. He knew that he had sent into the inner circles and the byways of Washington and was calling before his committee a multitude of the scandalmongers who had made Mary Lincoln's life wretched, while she was in the White House. Sumner did not believe that Edmunds would dare to embody the gossip in his report and he hoped rather against hope that the very venom of the gossipers would prove their absurdity to the eight other men who formed the committee.

Each day until the 13th of June, Sumner asked for the report, without result, asked for it so regularly that there developed a sort of rite: Sumner rising and putting his request in his courtly way; a hiss from the gallery; Edmunds slowly getting to his feet and deliberately making an excuse that deceived no one; a patter of handelapping from the gallery; and the gavel brought down by the Vice-president.

But on the 13th, Edmunds gave his report. Senator Edmunds:

"We object to giving the pension on the following grounds:

- "1. The President of the United States is a civil and not a military officer.
- "2. The death of Mr. Lincoln occurred in the walks of civil life and no doubt as the result of earnest public service.
- "3. No principle therefore on which other pensions have hitherto been granted in this country will warrant the passage of this bill. No provision like this was made for the families of Washington, Adams, Jefferson, Madison, Monroe, Jackson, Van Buren, Harrison, Tyler.
- "4. There is nothing to distinguish this one, putting it upon its most favorable grounds, from that of the great body of civil officers of the Government of all grades from the highest to the lowest who have lost their lives, frequently by violence, while in the performance of their public duties. . . .
- "5. It has not been thought wise—considering the true nature and office of government in a free country—to provide permanent emoluments in any form for the families of the highest officers of State as is done in many European countries. With us, the moment an office terminates for any cause, the officer or his surviv-

#### MARY TODD LINCOLN

ing family become equal but not superior members of society. The noblest rank and the noblest name is that of citizen.

"6. The Committee is constrained to find from the facts before it that Mrs. Lincoln is not in a destitute state.

Remainder of Mr. Lincoln's salary paid to
her\$22,000.00
Paid to her Nov. 13, 1867, her share of Mr.
Lincoln's estate 36,765.00

\$58,765.00

"7. The Committee has good reason to think that after Mr. Lincoln's death, she received no inconsiderable amount of clothing, plate, household goods, etc., which in considering her pecuniary condition should be added to the above sum. Benefits were opened for her in various cities of which we do not know the results. The Committee thinks that a fortune of \$60,000 or even one third that sum for one lady must take her out of the category of those whose necessities in connection with public services give them a claim upon the Treasury.

"8. There are other facts bearing upon this subject, it is probably not needful to refer to,



MARY TODD LINCOLN

By courtesy of the Illinois State Historical Library. Original in the Frederick II. Meserve Collection



# THE UNGRACIOUS GIFT

but which are generally known and evidence in respect to a part of which is in the possession of the Committee. . . .

"The Committee recommend that the bill be indefinitely postponed."

A short discussion followed the reading of the report on whether the report should be debated. This was put to vote, the nays winning. The report was accepted and Sumner's first bout lost.

He now had measured the depth of Edmunds' opposition and was determined that his next bill should not get into the hands of the clever Vermonter. He introduced a new bill for \$3,000, three weeks later and then set all his skill in motion to prevent it being referred to Edmunds' committee. Cameron backed him in this and so did Morton of Indiana and Howard of Michigan, but Sumner was father, mother and nurse to the bill. In season and out, he gave the Senate no rest on the matter.

But Edmunds was as famous as an obstructionist as Sumner was as an aggressor. People from all over the country wrote to the Senator from Massachusetts protesting against his attempt to waste the public moneys on Mrs. Lincoln. Even some of his distinguished friends,

one of them Lydia Maria Child, a number of that group of noble women of whom he had spoken to Mary years before, called him to account for his action. Sumner was courteous but unmoved.

"I wish to call the honorable members' attention to the fact that a bill granting a pension to Mrs. Mary Lincoln is before us. It has been too long before us."

Senator Tipton of Nebraska: "I object."

Senator Sumner: "Will not my friend allow me to plead with him that a vote be taken?"

Senator Tipton: "I will not. You shall not vote in Senator Edmunds' absence."

Senator Morrell: "I am bitterly opposed to paying \$3,000. I propose to strike out \$3,000 and insert \$5.00 per day. We should not pay her enough to educate a brilliant boy abroad. In my judgment he had much better be educated over here than abroad where he will not be brought up under the principles of his father."

Senator Cameron: "Tut! Tut!"

Mr. McCreery of Kentucky: "Three of our Presidents have died during their term of service. In each instance I believe Congress voted one year's salary to their wives. . . . Now what is there in the peculiar circumstances of this case that authorizes a greater stretch of power and

demands an ampler provision? Harrison and Tyler spent their lives in public service; they signalized their devotion to their country by encountering her foes whether British, Indian or Mexican upon the bloody field . . . Their wives, it is true, were domestic ladies and did not choose to travel in Europe. If Mrs. Lincoln chooses to do so I am the last man here or elsewhere who would criticize her taste. But I am the last man to tax the people for its indulgence. The good old State of North Carolina has a circulation of less than one dollar to the inhabitant. Is she to be called upon for a part of that, that Mrs. Lincoln may give more freely to the beggars of Europe?"

Mr. Sumner: "The object of this kindness, this beneficence, on the part of Congress, has

been suffering in poverty . . ."

Mr. Edmunds: "I rise to a point of order..."

Mr. Saulsbury of Delaware: "I was no friend, personal or political, of Lincoln. I believed his administration disastrous. I believe it unfortunate that any such man ever lived as President. A pension to Mrs. Lincoln is against previous precedent. And yet if Lincoln's widow is in want, I am willing to contribute with other Sen-

ators from my private purse for her relief." Mr. Fenton: "It is a delicate matter in regard to which each Senator can in the utmost quiet of spirit seek a decision. I think the facts relating to the pecuniary condition of Mrs. Lincoln are at present very different from what may be inferred from the report of the committee, but even from the most unfavorable view the committee have been able to give the case, I greatly regret that we cannot unite in support of the bill and pass it without discussion. . . . She is the widow of Lincoln. Can the nation stop to discuss whether she has been circumspect in all things? She survives, it may not be for a great time, the noble President whose services to the Nation were inestimable and who perished in its cause. . . ."

Thus day succeeded day and month followed month. As the winter of 1869-70 came on, the bill assumed a deep significance in Sumner's mind. He told himself that in this struggle, the soul stuff of the democracy was being tested. He began to wonder if that common mind, on whose high humanity he had based his faith in the permanence of the nation, was not too frequently ruled by ignoble impulse, was not too frequently ungrateful, to insure a long life to America.

He was getting on in years, though he still looked to be in his prime. He was 58. He had lived life deeply, though splendidly and he had learned some important things. One of these was that one must gauge the possibility of success of any big enterprise by measuring the characters of its protagonists. If Americans in bulk were grasping and gullible, then the fighting he had done for twenty years was wasted.

This struggle became very important to him. And, an added incentive, he was very lonely. It comforted him to be fighting for a woman.

On the morning of July 9, 1870, he wiped the sweat from his face, tossed the great mane of grizzled hair back from his forehead and rose in his place in the Senate. One fine hand, the same hand that had brought Mary Lincoln the slobbering teacup, rested on his hip in a familiar gesture of defiance. But he spoke gently and as if bringing up a new matter.

"A bill for the pension of Mrs. Lincoln was introduced at the last Congress. It failed. During the first week of the present Congress, now more than a year ago, I introduced another bill. I plead with the honorable members to act upon it."

"I find this discussion indelicate," cried Sena-

tor Fenton of New York. "Mrs. Lincoln may have been indiscreet. She may have forfeited a measure of the respect due one in her position. Granted. But still she is the widow of Lincoln."

Yates of Illinois uttered so loud a groan that he immediately obtained the floor. "Sir, there are recollections and memories, sad, silent and deep, which induce me to vote against this bill. Amid all the perils of life, amid good and evil report, a woman should be true to her husband. Mr. President, this occasion does not require and I shall not go into details. But there are reasons why I cannot vote for this bill."

Senator Howard of Michigan obeyed a nod from Sumner.—"I cannot refrain from expressing my conviction that the statement just made by the honorable Senator from Illinois, impugning the loyalty of Mrs. Lincoln is not well founded. I feel it due to the honor of the nation and the honor of the State to put in my respectful contradiction of that statement. It was my fortune during the Presidency of Mr. Lincoln to have occasional and I may say frequent conversations with his lady and I am prepared to say now that I conversed with no lady anywhere in the United States who expressed a warmer sympathy for the cause of the country or a

greater anxiety for the success of the arms of the Government than that lady did. And, sir, she did not limit her feelings to those mere fervent expressions; she visited the hospitals and as far as was practical she administered to the sufferings of the sick and the wounded, exhibiting by her works of charity the warmest sympathy in the cause in which her lamented husband fell and I think it a little hard that that imputation should be thrown out against that lady without one single scintilla of proof either from direct evidence or from the circumstances of her life. It is due her, absent as she is and in a foreign land, that her good name should not be tarnished. Sir, I hope this bill will pass. I hope the United States will do itself the honor of treating the family of the immortal Lincoln with the same consideration at least which has been extended to other great officers of the Army."

Saulsbury rose. Sumner tried to interrupt him but the Southerner would not be denied his chance to give a covert insult to Lincoln's wife. He made this priceless effort:

"I protest, Mr. President, against the merits or demerits of Mrs. Lincoln being brought into this controversy. I presume the Senate is made up of gentlemen and I do not suppose there is any man who has the instincts of a gentleman who will reflect on the character of Mrs. Lincoln. I treat Mrs. Lincoln as I treat every lady.

... Whatever may have been the wisdom of the political policy of her husband, whether it was wise or unwise, history must determine. I thought then and I think now that it was unwise.

...

"But, sir, as an American Senator I rise in my place to-day, to protest against the character of this lady, whatever it may be, being brought into this controversy. I know nothing of it. I believe her to be pure and upright, amiable and lovely. I know nothing to the contrary. It does not enter into the question. And in my eyes, Mrs. Lincoln stands to-day just as lovely, as amiable and pure as though she were the widow of a Democratic President around whom my hopes clustered and my warmest affection twined.

"But, Mr. President, the question is whether you will establish a civil list of pensioners upon this great Republic. If this stood alone, while I am opposed to any act of her husband almost, I would vote for any amount of money you would give this woman and when I say 'woman' I speak in that lofty sense which God Almighty com-

municated to man. He never communicated the word 'lady.' It is 'woman,' lovely woman in all her attractions, in all her influences, that make her dear to every man. While I oppose this bill, I want it distinctly understood that as one Democratic Senator on this floor I place it on no grounds of opposition to that woman."

On July 13, Senator Tipton made a long and bitter arraignment of the bill, dwelling again on Mrs. Lincoln's attempt to sell her clothes. He spoke of the large income that Mrs. Lincoln enjoyed from her husband's estate but failed to point out the fact that the estate was not divided until after Mary had put up her disastrous struggle to raise money on her clothing and jewelry. He had a good deal to say about Tad's education and ended with a sentence that ought to have given him permanent place among the Senatorial immortals!

"I know the income of the infant son is \$2,000 a year which would keep the child at Yale College until there should be lost in the flood of ages, each bard and song and story."

At this point, Sumner whispered to Cameron. The Senator from Pennsylvania took the floor quickly. He had listened to the efforts of Tipton and Saulsbury with undisguised disgust.

"A great deal of opposition to this bill arises from prejudices, political prejudices and social prejudice, got up in this city. When Mr. Lincoln and his family came here, the society of Washington was very adverse to him or to any other Republican family who might come here and they were in a great measure ostracized. The ladies and even the gentlemen, the gossips of the town, did all they could to try to make a bad reputation for Mrs. Lincoln and tried to do so for the President. His career was so extraordinary, he was such an extraordinary man that they could not destroy him, but they did carry their venom so far as to destroy the social position of his wife. I do not want to talk, and I sav. let us vote!"

"Aye, Mr. President!" said Sumner, rising quickly but a little wearily. It was noon now, a July noon in Washington with heat that dragged like leaden weights on every motion. "Aye, let us vote!" He paused and, lifting his head, his glorious voice swept the great room like an organ note. "Surely, the honorable members of the Senate must be weary of casting mud on the garments of the wife of Lincoln: those same garments on which one terrible night, a few years ago, gushed out the blood and brains of Abraham

## THE UNGRACIOUS GIFT

Lincoln. She sat beside him in the theater and she received that pitiful, that holy deluge on her hands and skirts because she was the chosen companion of his heart. She loved him. I speak of that which I know. He had all her love and Lincoln loved, as only his mighty heart could love, Mary Lincoln. Let us vote."

There was utter silence for a full minute on the floor and in the gallery. No one hissed. The gavel did not fall. Then the honorable members, in a hush, as if the coffin of Lincoln lay in their midst, voted.

The result stood, yeas, 28; nays, 20; absent, 24. Sumner had won the fight.







Mary, in Frankfurt, received from one of those curious-minded friends who always keep one informed of evil reports, a full account of the Senate fight. She wrote Sumner several letters of deepest gratitude. But the viciousness of the Senate debate robbed the pension of any aura of national graciousness or beneficence.

Mary, by this time, had lost the power of feeling surprise at any show of bad taste in the public attitude toward her. Still, as she made her preparations for returning to America, she was conscious of a sense of wonder that the men of the Senate, though without bowels of compassion for Lincoln's wife, showed not some shadow of decent feeling for his two sons. Robert was suffering torment from the Senate debates. Tad, while in Europe, was partially sheltered from knowledge. But that little made the boy almost frantic.

She delayed her return for many weeks. Finally, it was the thought that she was as much the widow of a soldier as Mrs. U. S. Grant ever could be that enabled her to make the start.

She reached here, at last, not with chin up as God knows Abraham Lincoln's wife had every right to come home to America, but shrinking. uneasy, wondering when the next blow would fall.

She went back to Chicago, glad to be among her own. Tad at 18 was now the center of her existence for Bob was married and living his own successful life. Tad's health was a ceaseless source of anxiety to her. He never had been strong. He was ailing when they reached Chicago and early in July he went to bed with typhoid fever. On the morning of the 15th, in violent agony, he passed away.

"Baby Eddie, Willie, Tad, Abr'am! There is a curse on me," Mary told her sister Elizabeth who sought to comfort her. "You ought to pray that I be taken now to my husband and children."

But life had not yet finished with little Mary Todd. Bit by bit there revived in her her old love of things of the mind. She turned back to books and study. She was 53 now but clothes, even mourning clothes, mattered much to her and she found pleasure in dressing beautifully—in black.

She lived in shrinking seclusion, sensitive to

every misinterpretation, yet gossip sought her out. It was said that Lincoln's wife was insane and that she was kept locked up by her relations. This story persisted even when she went abroad to spend a winter in Paris or London.

She liked Paris. She could be more secluded there than anywhere else. She kept a little apartment one winter and found tranquillity among the French as she could not among Americans. That winter of 1879 while hanging a picture in her little salon she slipped and fell, injuring her spine. She suffered a great deal from the inflammation that followed, but she managed to keep about, and managed to get back to Springfield, still showing her interest in fashion for she had displaced the crinoline with the wonders of the bustle.

Robert was making progress in politics—a son of whom to be proud and Mary was proud of him but to her sensitive eyes a career in politics was a course to be viewed with acute anxiety. Those ghastly years in the White House had broken her nerve. She worried about Bob and she worried about her old age. If she was to be an invalid, she would be a burden to her relatives and she hated the thought.

Elizabeth laughed at her. "You don't picture

yourself properly, Mary. You don't realize that in spite of all you've been through, you're still the best company in the world. I think if a locomotive ran over you, you'd still be a spitfire, still have something funny to say."

They were driving to the station in Springfield when Mrs. Edwards said this. Mary was going to New York to get treatments for her back. She was looking delicate but her eyes were still lovely and her skin still as soft as a child's.

She shook her head. "Abr'am and Willie were the humorists of our family. Willie used to tell jokes when he was only five. For that matter Baby Eddie used to draw what he called funny pictures and chuckle with rapture over them. He was the image of his father when he lay in his little casket." She looked up, caught her sister's long face and smiled. "I'm making you out a liar, poor Elizabeth! Wait till I get back from New York! I really can't be funny now. My back feels like— Oh, do you remember old black Zeb, our gardener in Lexington, when he had the 'misery'? He and I are twin souls, now." And as Elizabeth helped her from the phaëton. Mary doubled over, screwed her face up in one of her marvelous impersonations and she left her sister on the station platform, helpless with laughter.

The New York doctor couldn't cure her poor back and after a few weeks, Mary returned to Springfield and went to bed. After all, the Edwards' house in which Abraham Lincoln had courted and married her was more home to her than any other place.

She was sick, now, helpless at last and at last giving way to her fears. She thought that poverty finally had claimed her for its own and she believed that Bob, now Secretary of War, was about to be assassinated. All her old gayety, and all her sense of humor could not help her now. But this state did not last long. Fate, at last, finished with tormenting her.

On the morning of July 16, 1882, came a blessed stroke of paralysis and at 8 o'clock that night, she died. They laid her in the room where forty years before, Lincoln had made her his wife.

On the morning of the 17th, newspapers all over the country announced her death. Many of them made this the occasion for raking up old stories about her. But the New York *Times* and the New York *Tribune* paid tributes that would have meant the very bread of heaven to Mary,

had they made them twenty years before. Too late! She lay dead and indifferent.

At any rate, it is almost with a sob of relief that one quotes Mary Lincoln's last appearance in the newspapers. The N. Y. World, July 17. 1882: "Mary Todd Lincoln, wife of the expresident, died vesterday at Springfield, Illinois. at the home of her sister, Mrs. Ninian Edwards. The immediate cause of death was a fall while arranging a picture, in Paris, in 1879, which caused inflammation of the spinal cord.—When in New York last winter for treatment, her physician, Dr. Savre of this city, said she could not keep a maid to care for her because she was entirely dependent on her pension of \$3,000. Sayre found her a highly intelligent and interesting woman. She died at 8 P.M. after a shock of paralysis. She was haunted at the last by a fear of poverty and that her son (now Secretary of War) would be assassinated like his father.

"It may be remembered that some years ago, Mrs. Lincoln was made the subject of much comment through the publication of entirely unauthorized reports that she had been married to a German baron much her junior."

I'm afraid I gave a grunt at the World's idea

of an adequate obituary note and turned to other papers.

The Louisville Courier-Journal, July 17, 1882. "The body of the late Mary Todd Lincoln lies to-day peacefully in a little room in her sister's house and just within the door leading to the room where the wedding ceremony was performed which made her the wife of the martyr President."

Albany Argus, July 17, 1882. "Mrs. Lincoln like others of a naturally singular character and eccentric habits suffered much unmerited contumely both before and since her husband's death. She neither was a woman of great refinement nor of high intellectuality; yet she possessed a strong faith in her husband as a man of great promise and recognized in him qualities that were unseen and unrecognized by his fellow men for years after her openly expressed ideas for his future. Like the flint he possessed fire but needed sharp concussion to show it. Their marriage was nevertheless marked by great affection and happiness and the voyage of life was peaceful and serene until the tragic death of her husband."

N. Y. Tribune, July 17, 1882. "After he became President, she sustained her new position

with intelligence and dignity. There probably never was an occupant of the White House so persistently slandered and maligned as Mrs. Lincoln. The fact that she was a native of Kentucky was the occasion of the most unjust suspicions and the most bitter libels. The hostility of the Democratic papers and semi-rebel society at Washington was easy to understand. But she was the subject of no less unjust attacks on the part of earnest Republicans who were much more loyal than the President or his family. Owing to certain peculiarities of manner she never received the credit due her either for her loyalty or her kindness of heart."

N. Y. Times, July 18, 1882. "Lincoln was not an ideal husband. While he was talking wisdom and philosophy in the market place, his wife was waiting for him to come home bringing provisions for the empty larder. Lincoln was loyal, affectionate, devoted, but he often lamented to his intimate friends that he was not what New England people call a good provider.—The brief stay of the Lincoln family in the White House could not have been happy. The shadow of the war lay over the land and the President and his wife were never for an hour beyond reach of sorrowings for the wounded and lamentations

for the dead. In an atmosphere like that which then enveloped the White House nothing but the strongest conjugal affection could have maintained even a shadow of domestic happiness. But it is a matter of record that Lincoln in his homely phrase constantly referred to his home and family, his wife and boys and to his daily domestic concerns with real enjoyment and with the unaffected simplicity of a villager who never had dreamed of power or greatness. It is not easy to forgive those slanderous tongues of Washington who maligned the wife of the President, who idolized and worshiped her husband. These fantastic inventions born of a time prolific of chimeras and phantasms are now laid to rest with the unhappy lady whose last years have been filled with so much to make life a burden. She went away saying, 'Surely no sorrow is like unto my sorrow."

And so, the end.

It seems a great pity that she could not have shared her husband's tragic death. That would have hushed the slanderers. She was not fortunate in her taking off as was Lincoln in his. She had done her work as had the Emancipator. It would have been a gesture of the greatest magnanimity had Fate cut her thread simultaneously

with his, for their threads were inextricably interwoven. Mary never recovered her balance, was never fully normal from the moment she stared at that dreadful deluge on her skirts (in Ford's Theater). God pity her, for men did not!

But even were she a thousand times more erratic, she did a great work. Why has this been ignored? Why has she never been given her share of credit for Lincoln's immortality?

Because there was nothing immediately spectacular in her contribution to her country, no concentrated and specific act on which the attention of her fellows could focus, forgetting the lesser and irritating characteristics. She sacrificed herself to the cause of the Union as truly as did Lincoln.

Had there been no Mary Todd, there would have been no Lincoln the Emancipator. People ignored and still ignore this obvious fact while they dwell on her bitter tongue and her interfering, managing ways; she had need of these, indeed and indeed, while she was remolding Abraham Lincoln to fill the country's awful need. He was no simple problem for any wife to solve!

She did not sign some Magna Charta for her race. She did not lead the Union gloriously

through some bloody Gettysburg. She did not inspire the nation with a great ideal, immortally phrased. She did not drop with the assassin's knife in her heart.

And so we have misunderstood her greatness. And so in all the world there has been raised to her not a single monument in word or song or marble. No one has thought to preserve her birthplace in Kentucky. "No lamp has marked her window for a shrine." There is no tablet to "signalize her terrace, teach new generations which succeed the old, the pavement of her street is holy ground."

Yet she gave all that she had. And her box of spikenard entered into the vital essence of the Union.

"Jesus said, Let her alone. Why trouble ye her? She hath wrought a good work on me.— She hath done what she could. Verily I say unto you, Wheresoever this gospel shall be preached throughout the whole world, this also that she hath wrought shall be spoken of for a memorial of her."

THE END



SOME POPULAR FALLACIES ABOUT LINCOLN



"He will go into the President's room and he will come out: and when he comes through the door there will be a strange vision of a large foot just behind him, suggesting to any navy constructor the idea of a propeller—"

In other words, Mr. Lincoln is about to kick out of his office a notorious gambler who has tried to bribe him: not the Lincoln of legend, but the real man that his secretary, William Stoddard, set down in his diary.

When nearly eight years ago I began to study Lincoln's life with the purpose of writing a novel about him, my mental picture of the Emancipator was the one usual with the plain American citizen. I saw him as the enormously tall, awkward, badly dressed middle-Westerner who had been self-inspired to free the slaves. I thought of him most frequently with tears rolling down his face as he gave a reprieve to the mother of some soldier who had deserted or had slept on sentry duty. Or if he was not weeping, I thought of him as offending some dignitary with the pat obscenity of a story or with the crudeness of his manner. This early Lincoln of mine al-

ways was sad, even when he laughed, partly because he was unhappy with his wife and still regretted Ann Rutledge and partly because his attitude toward life was the one expressed in that curious ode, O why should the spirit of mortal be proud?

Champion rail splitter of the world, and proud of it, was the Lincoln I knew eight years ago. He wore only badly fitting, black frock-coat suits, wrinkled and unbrushed and a rusty high hat. He was absolutely patient. He never lost his temper. He never swore. He had no eye for nature. He had no true religious faith. I knew in general that he had been a great statesman because he had freed the slaves, but chiefly was I concerned with his personal oddities and perfections.

I really loved this picture of Lincoln and so I resented violently a remark made by my father who was still living when I began my study. I had told him the way I saw Lincoln. Father at the age of fourteen had been a drummer boy at Shiloh. He had a vivid recollection of the Civil War period. He listened to my description, impatiently.

"But I remember Lincoln!" he said. "I saw him early in January of 1865. I was in Wash-

ington with my father who was one of a clergymen's committee that was doing some work for the Sanitary Commission. I saw him the first time standing on the corner of Fourteenth Street and Pennsylvania Avenue, talking to a little man, Seward it was. Lincoln may have been a clodhopper when he lived in Springfield, but let me tell you that after four years in Washington, he was a magnificent looking human being: Emperor of the commonalty, he was, and, by God, he looked it!" rising from his chair, his blue eyes blazing as they always did when he gave me this picture of Lincoln, "He had a big gray cape wrapped around him and a dark felt hat pulled low on his head. 'And petty man walked under his huge legs and peeped about to find dishonorable graves.'-You and your Lincoln-a scarecrow built of a hoe handle and a frock coat. That's the best your generation can do!"

"Oh!" I winced, "how can you say such a thing?"

"Because it's true!" declared my father stoutly. "We're short on great figures in this country and Lincoln was chosen for apotheosis by the public prints, but not until long after his death. And this lapse of time gave the liars a chance. Your generation's Lincoln! A stuffed

shirt made by county fair orators and Sundayschool teachers. They've obscured and blighted his name by pinning the rag tags and bobtails of silly folk stories all over him. You've tried to make him a cross between a clown and a god. He was neither."

He paused.

"Well, what was he?" I asked.

"I can't paint him," said father gruffly, "nor can you. But at least you needn't try to cover

up your incapacity with bits of trash."

There was sense in this, I admitted, although I felt sore over his sweeping condemnation of my "presentation of a man." Anyhow, I could not reply because I suddenly realized that I was dealing only in second-hand impressions while my blessed father had first-hand facts. He had his clean-cut memories. Ah, how I missed them—not least of the thousand poignant losses inseparable from father's going—when I came to write the novel. He had not only the memories but he had read more than I. This at least I could remedy and I plunged into the vast realm of Lincolniana.

This article is in no sense a résumé of that reading. It is by way of being a public acknowledgment with proof that my father was right!

# SOME POPULAR FALLACIES

Making one's way through Lincolniana in search of truth is like creeping over vast rubbish heaps picking out lost jewels—mosaics with which to make the portrait. Rubbish! Rubbish of hearsay and sentimental gush and falsehood and irrelevancies almost inextricably mingled with the dishearteningly small number of facts about Lincoln contained in statements made by intelligent people who knew Lincoln and wrote about him at the time they knew him.

My mosaic portrait grew with extraordinary slowness; little by little, fact set beside fact, the picture formed itself. I did not make it. The men and women of the Civil War period outlined it and filled it in. Infinitesimal bits of jewelrymonth on month, year on year. It was published. I looked at it with astonishment. It was not our Lincoln, your and my generation's. It was not my father's. Was it Lincoln at all? I do not know. I cannot know. But at least, to the best of my belief, it contained none of the things Lincoln had not been. The rag tags were not there: none of the things I recognized as trash: none of the things we have used to dwarf Lincoln in our passion to bring him within our understanding. And the catalog of our sins in this direction is not short or unimportant.

An essential part of the popular history of Lincoln is that he was an expert at rail splitting. Yet this is what the President said to Noah Brooks in 1863 or 1864. Noah Brooks was the Washington correspondent for the Sacramento He had known Lincoln in the President's Springfield days and on his arrival in Washington, the old friendship was renewed. Brooks was to have been John Hav's successor as a secretary to Lincoln during the second administration. Brooks wrote daily letters home to his paper. He seems to have had an accurate and painstaking mind. Lincoln must have found him so or he would not have booked him for a position involving so large an amount of both qualities.

To Brooks, with whom he was riding through the Virginia woods, Lincoln said that "although he had undue credit for rail-splitting, he did know how to fell a tree: and he gave an entertaining disquisition on the art, illustrated by examples before us. He said that he did not remember splitting many rails in his life. In fact, rail fences were not in his line at all: but he was proud, he said, of his record as a woodsman. Somebody reminded him that he had authenticated some rails as of his splitting, during the

Lincoln and Hamlin campaign. 'No, I didn't,' he replied. 'They brought those rails in where I was, with a great hurrah, and what I did say was that if I ever split any rails on the piece of ground that those rails came from (and I was not sure whether I had or not), I was sure that those were the rails.'

Brooks helps to destroy another much-loved fallacy about Lincoln, namely, that he had little interest in nature and natural beauty. Again riding through the woods with Brooks, Lincoln observed a vine which wrapped a tree in its luxuriant growth. "Yes," he said, "that is very beautiful. But that vine is like certain habits of men; it decorates the ruin that it makes."

At another time, in the winter woods, just after a snowfall, Brooks found Lincoln standing on the stump of a tree looking over the landscape. The President called attention to the various subtle features of the view and said, among other things, that he "liked the trees best when they were not in leaf as their anatomy could then be studied." "And he bade me look at the delicate yet firm outline of a leafless tree against the sky. Then pointing to the fine network of shadows cast on the snow by the branches and twigs he said that that was the profile of the

tree. The very next day, some one was discussing with him the difference between character and reputation, when he said,—with a look as if to remind us of what he had been talking about the day before,—perhaps a man's character was like a tree and his reputation like its shadow; the shadow is what we think of it: the tree is the real thing."

California, it seems, produces not only Native Sons but other precious bits of Lincolniana on this same theme. The following is from the San Francisco Bulletin which published a letter written by a California woman who visited the Lincolns at the Soldiers' Home in 1863. The Soldiers' Home, about four miles from the White House, was used for a summer residence by the President. There were many beautiful trees on the place, as there are still. Near (not too near) the cottage where the family lived was the soldiers' cemetery at this time filled with new-made graves. In the summer twilight, the little group of visitors stood looking at the grass when they were joined by Lincoln. He paused, taking in the scene, then murmured:

<sup>&</sup>quot;'How sleep the brave who sink to rest By all their country's wishes blest—

## SOME POPULAR FALLACIES

And women o'er their graves shall weep, Where nameless heroes calmly sleep.'—

"One of the ladies, catching a bit of green from an intruding branch, said it was a cedar and another thought it was spruce.

"'Let me discourse on a theme I understand,' said the President. 'I know all about trees in right of being a backwoodsman. I'll show you the difference between a spruce, pine and cedar and this shred of green which is neither one nor the other but a kind of illegitimate cypress!' He then proceeded to gather specimens of each and explain the distinctive formations of foliage belonging to each species. 'Trees,' he said, 'are as deceptive in their likeness to one another as are certain classes of men amongst whom none but a physiognomist's eye can detect dissimilar moral features until events have developed them—'"

In my reading I came upon several other comments made by Lincoln redolent of the woods and of a Nature which he knew and loved. But none more touching nor to me more authentic than the anecdote my mother gave me. It was given her by her distant relative, William Cullen Bryant who, alack, was no admirer of Lincoln. Nevertheless, he said that he had been much touched by the President's quoting to him:

- "I have heard the mavis singing her love song to the
  - I have seen the dewdrop clinging to the rose just newly born."

"And," added Lincoln, "having experienced that, a man carries about all the beauty of God's world in his remembrance."

I am tempted to add here another comment made by Lincoln not on Nature's charms but redolent of woodcraft and refuting another popular misconception about him. He carried a cane on the occasion of his first inauguration and much has been made of his alleged awkwardness in handling what was believed to be an utter novelty to him. A good many reporters, newspaper and otherwise, concluded that Lincoln had never touched a cane before and their conclusion has become one of the rag tags.

F. B. Carpenter who painted the famous picture of Lincoln reading the Emancipation Proclamation to his Cabinet, spent six months in the White House with Lincoln in '64 while at this work. He tells many priceless stories. One of the less important but nevertheless significant comments concerns a cane carried by a man who was calling on the President. Taking the cane in his hand, Lincoln said:



THE LINCOLN FAMILY (PAINTING BY CARPENTER)
Courtesy of the Illinois State Historical Society



"I always used a cane when I was a boy. It was a freak of mine. My favorite one was a knotted beech stick and I carved the head myself. There's a mighty amount of character in sticks. Don't you think so? You have seen these fishing poles that fit into a cane? Well, that was an old idea of mine. Dogwood clubs were favorite ones with the boys. I suppose they use them yet. Hickory is too heavy unless you get it from a young sapling. Have you ever noticed how a stick in one's hand will change his appearance? Old women and witches wouldn't look so without sticks. Meg Merrilies understands that."

To understand fully the stupidity of insisting on the one poem for Lincoln one has only to realize that poetry was far more important to his generation than to ours. Poetry was news in that period. Reading the diaries, old letters, autobiographies and biographies of the men among whom Lincoln moved, one learns that the ability to quote verse, not only classic verse but the latest from Longfellow, Whittier, Tennyson, Stedman, Bryant, Holmes, was an important part of the educated man's and woman's equipment. Lincoln would have had to be intellectually deaf to have missed, indeed not to

## SOME POPULAR FALLACIES

have shared, the popular liking and admiration for the poets.

Some charming pictures come to us from those hectic days in Lincoln's Washington. Charles Sumner, Senator from Massachusetts, Chairman of the Committee on Foreign Relations, at outs with half the members of the Cabinet because they were not as radical as he and at the moment sternly disapproving of Lincoln because he seemed to favor privateering—Sumner, six feet four, wearing an English suit of lavender checks, bursting into the Cabinet room with frowning General Jackson over the fireplace, with the lovely red spring hills of Virginia through the windows, with Lincoln, Chase, Seward, Stanton, Welles, leaning on the scarred oak table studying the Slave Map—Sumner red with hurry and eagerness, pulling from his pocket a letter from the Duchess of Argyle and reading aloud the poem she has sent him, Tennyson's Welcome to Alexandra, which had been read to the Prince of Wales' bride the month before, March, 1863;

"Sea king's daughter from over the sea,
Saxon and Norman and Dane are we,
But all of us Danes in our welcome of thee—
Alexandra!"

### SOME POPULAR FALLACIES

And even Stanton being moved and excited and exalted as was Sumner!

How could Lincoln not have been familiar with poetry and not have liked it? Who so intellectually alive and hungry and growing as he? And so we find General Viele telling us that early in the war when Lincoln and he and Stanton took the night boat down to Fortress Monroe. Lincoln quoted poetry frequently for hours to them-Byron and Browning and Shakespeare. John Hay, his secretary, states that "Lincoln loved Burns. When he read aloud the lines beginning 'The bridegroom may forget the bride,' he said that 'Burns never touched a sentiment without carrying it to its ultimate expression and leaving nothing further to be said.' He was fond of Tom Hood's Haunted House and of Whittier's poems, and Bryant's, and of Whitman's Leaves of Grass."

Brooks tells us that one November day "when we were driving out to the Soldiers' Home, some aspect of the scene recalled *The Last Leaf* to his mind. Slowly and with excellent judgment he recited the whole poem. Enlarging upon the pathos, wit and humor of Holmes, I found that the President never had seen a copy of the genial doctor's works although he was not certain that

he had not. I offered to lend him my copy of the poems, a little gold-and-white book.—About a week after leaving the book with the President, I called at the house one evening and finding him alone, we settled down for a quiet chat. He took from a drawer in his table the white-andgold Holmes and went over the book with much gusto, reading or reciting several poems that had struck his fancy. He expressed his surprise at finding that some of the verses he admired most had been drifting around in newspapers without the name of the author attached to them: it was in this way, he said, that he had found The Last Leaf although he did not know that Dr. Holmes was the author. Finally, he said that he liked Lexington as well as anything in the book, The Last Leaf excepted, and he began to read the poem: but when he came to the stanza beginning

"Green be the graves where her martyrs are lying! Shroudless and tombless they sunk to their rest-

his voice faltered and he gave me the book with the whispered request, 'You read it, I can't.' Months afterward, when several ladies were in the red parlor, calling on Mrs. Lincoln, he recited that poem without missing a word so far as I could remember. And yet I do not believe

## SOME POPULAR FALLACIES

that he ever saw the text of Lexington except during the few busy days when he had my book."

Shakespeare Lincoln really studied. He had some very clear-cut ideas on the way he should be read. He said one morning to Carpenter, apropos of Edwin Booth's appearance in Washington in Hamlet: "There is one passage of that play which is very apt to be slurred over by the actor or omitted altogether which seems to me the choicest part of the play. It is the soliloguy of the king after the murder. It always struck me as one of the finest touches of nature in the world," "Then," says Carpenter, "the President, throwing himself into the very spirit of the scene, took up the words, 'O my offence is rank, it smells to heaven,' and went on for thirtysix lines, entirely from memory, with a feeling and appreciation unsurpassed by anything I have witnessed on the stage. Remaining in thought for a few minutes, he continued: 'The opening of the play of King Richard, the Third, seems to me often entirely misapprehended. It is quite common for an actor to come upon the stage and in a sophomoric style to begin with a flourish:

<sup>&</sup>quot;" "Now is the winter of our discontent

Made glorious summer by this sun of York—""

He quoted at length, then gave a résumé and picture of the processes of Richard's mind and ended with the comment, 'The prologue is an utterance of the most intense bitterness and satire.'"

No, the splendid isolation of Why Should the Spirit of Mortal Be Proud, will have to be destroyed!

In the same category with his lack of love of poetry must go his lack of religion. This rag tag must have been based on the fact that Lincoln professed no particular creed although he attended the Presbyterian church. But if by religion one means a faith in an over-ruling Providence to Whom individuals and nations alike are accountable, Lincoln possessed religion of a high order. One has only to go to his own public utterances to prove that:

"As Jefferson said, I tremble for my country when I remember that God is just."

"It is the duty of nations as well as of men to own their dependence upon the over-ruling power of God; to confess their sins and transgressions in humble sorrow, yet with the assured hope that genuine repentance will lead to mercy and pardon: and to recognize the sublime truth announced in the Holy Scriptures and proven by all history that those nations only are blessed whose God is the Lord:

"And in so much as we know that by his divine law, nations, like individuals, are subjected to punishments and chastisements in this world. may we not justly fear that the awful calamity of civil war which now desolates the land may be but a punishment inflicted upon us for our presumptuous sins, to the needful end of our national reformation as a whole people? We have been the recipients of the choicest bounties of Heaven. We have been preserved these many years in peace and prosperity. We have grown in numbers, wealth and power as no other nation has ever grown; but we have forgotten God. We have forgotten the gracious hand which preserved us in peace, and multiplied and enriched and strengthened us; and we have vainly imagined in the deceitfulness of our hearts, that all these blessings were produced by some superior wisdom and virtue of our own. Intoxicated with unbroken success, we have become too self-sufficient to feel the necessity of redeeming and preserving grace, too proud to pray to the God that made us-" He then designates April 30, 1863, as a day of fasting and prayer. "All this being done in sincerity and truth, let us then rest humbly in the hope authorized by divine teaching, that the united cry of the nation will be heard on high—"

From his first inaugural: "Intelligence, patriotism, Christianity and a firm reliance on Him who has never yet forsaken this favored land—"

Thanksgiving Proclamation, 1862: "It is meet and right to recognize and confess the presence of the Almighty Father, and the power of his hand equally in these triumphs and in these sorrows—"

Thanksgiving Proclamation, 1863: "No human counsel hath devised, nor hath any mortal hand worked out these great things. They are the gracious gifts of the most high God."

If Abraham Lincoln had no religion, then he was a deep hypocrite!

You will recall that your and my Lincoln had utter patience and never showed irritation or lost his temper. I'm not sure now quite why we wished to paint him as mealy-mouthed or why we thought that a man so harassed must not at times give way or why we did not recognize that in dealing with the particularly thick-skinned type Lincoln found it necessary to be explosive. There are numerous evidences that, as he settled more and more into the heavy harness, it galled

him. Like most sweet-tempered people, he was rather pleased with himself when he gave way. Says John Hays' diary under date of October 30, 1863, quoting Lincoln:

"When Chase sent in his resignation I saw that the game was in my own hands and I put it through. When I had settled this important business at last with much labor and to my entire satisfaction into my room one day walked D. D. Field and G. Opdycke and began a new attack on me to remove Seward. For once in my life I rather gave my temper the rein, and I talked to those men pretty d—d plainly. Opdycke may be right in being cool to me. I may have given him reason this morning."

One must carry in mind some picture of the stress under which Lincoln worked. All day long, week after week, month after month, his anteroom was packed with anxious folk: mothers, fathers, wounded soldiers, cotton speculators, office seekers, army and navy officers, politicians, and more politicians, committees of every form the human mind could devise, curiosity seekers, all insisting on seeing the President. Lincoln saw them. He believed that his time belonged to the people who gave him his office.

He had no pride of place. People imposed on this fine democracy of his. None knew it better than Lincoln. Sometimes he showed this. Carpenter, sketching in the details of the Cabinet room which also was the President's office, saw many aspects of the people's methods of tormenting the Chief Executive. He tells, for example, of an army officer who had been cashiered and who carried the story of his grievance to Lincoln.

In due course he was admitted and told his tale. Lincoln's comment to the man was that, upon the man's own evidence, the case did not warrant executive interference. The man withdrew. A day or so later he again appeared with the same tale and received the same comment from the President. Yet a third time he appeared, forced his way to Lincoln's desk, and was heard with forbearance but received no reply for a moment.

The officer then exclaimed, "Well, Mr. President, I see you are fully determined not to do me justice!"

Lincoln rose, laid down a package of papers he held in his hand, and then seizing the defiant officer by the coat collar he marched him forcibly to the door, saying as he ejected him into the passage, "Sir! I give you fair warning never to show yourself in this room again. I can bear censure but not insult." In a whining tone the man begged for his papers which he had dropped. "Begone, sir!" said the President. "Your papers shall be sent to you. I never wish to see your face again!"

Carpenter records that Lincoln ordered two ladies who were saucy to him shown out of the house by an attendant. He also states that some one sent to Lincoln an envelope containing many editorials clipped from the *Independent*, written by Henry Ward Beecher. The editorials were harshly critical of Lincoln and his administration—expressed in no measured terms. "One rainy Sunday Mr. Lincoln took them from his drawer, and read them through to the very last word. As he finished reading them, his face flushed up with indignation. Dashing the package to the floor, he exclaimed, 'Is thy servant a dog that he should do this thing?'"

Colonel J. B. Carr, in his account of experiences near Fortress Monroe in 1861, pictures in a few sentences the petty confusion that so utterly disheartened Lincoln. While the movement of troops was in progress to take Norfolk, "a delay was caused by a dispute between two

general officers as to rank. . . . While our troops were absent on this expedition, General Mansfield and I were summoned to Fort Monroe by President Lincoln. Arriving there, Lincoln said, 'Colonel Carr, where is your command? 'At Camp Hamilton, sir.' 'Why are you not on the other side at Norfolk!' 'I am awaiting orders.' Turning to Mansfield, Lincoln said, 'Why are you here? Why not on the other side?' 'I am ordered to the front by General Wool,' replied Mansfield. President Lincoln, with vehement action, threw his tall hat to the floor and uttering strongly his disapproval and disappointment, he said finally, 'Send me some one who can write.' He dictated an order to General Wool, requiring that troops at Camp Hamilton be ordered at once to Norfolk."

Senator Sumner tells in his Works of hearing that one of Lincoln's military Governors had taken a position against schools for colored children as forbidden by the laws of the State. Sumner sought out the President, at once, tracing him to the War Department. As he made his complaint, he discovered "an impatience in Mr. Lincoln which he had not encountered before, the latter exclaiming, 'Do you take me for a school committee man?' 'Not at all,' replied Sumner,

'I take you for President of the United States; and I come to you with a case of wrong in attending to which your predecessor, George Washington, if alive, might add to his renown.' The President took this in good part and changing his tone proceeded to consider the case."

His patience as well as his temper sometimes gave way. Helen Nicolay, the daughter of his secretary, says that General Fry one summer afternoon, found Lincoln listening to a common soldier. The President "looked worn and tired. 'Well, my man, it may all be so but you must go to your officers about it,' he said when the petitioner stopped for breath. Again the tale recommenced, and the President gazed wearily through his window at the broad river in the distance. Finally Lincoln turned to him, out of patience:

"'Go away!' he said. 'Now go away! I cannot meddle in your case. I could as easily bail out the Potomac with a teaspoon as attend to all

the details of the army!"

Medill of the Chicago *Tribune* says that when the government tried to enforce the draft in 1864 there was so much trouble in Chicago that a delegation of Chicagoans, Medill among them, went to Lincoln to ask him to force Stanton to give them a new enrollment. Lincoln went to the War Office with the delegation in order to hear both sides.

"Lincoln," says Medill, "suddenly lifted his head and turned on us a black and frowning face. 'Gentlemen, after Boston, Chicago has been the chief instrument in bringing this war on the country.—It is you who are largely responsible for making blood flow as it has. You called for war until we had it. You called for emancipation and I have given it to you. Whatever you have asked for you have had. Now you come here begging to be let off from the call for men which I have made to carry on the war you have demanded. You ought to be ashamed of vourselves. I have a right to expect better things of you. And you, Medill, you are acting like a coward. You and your Tribune have had more influence than any paper in the Northwest in making this war. You can influence great masses, yet you cry to be spared at a moment when your career is suffering. Go home and send us these men!'—We all got up and went out and when the door closed, one of my colleagues said, 'Well, gentlemen, the Old Man is right. We ought to be ashamed of ourselves."

One more episode shows up still another bit

## SOME POPULAR FALLACIES

of trash. Every one says, every one believes, that Lincoln told smutty stories. For years I have tried to run down one of these obscene tales but as yet I've not found one. Of course, a good deal depends on what one means by obscenity. I used as a touchstone the synonyms in Webster: indecent, unchaste, lewd. With this definition as a test, it doesn't seem to me that Lincoln is guilty of the soft impeachment. He used, as country-bred people did then, simple Anglo-Saxon words for natural functions of the body. He had no hesitancy in speaking of these if the thought of them occurred to him, humorously or otherwise. "Still there is enough in the pole cat, self considered, to give us several hearty laughs." -But I have heard more jokes with a double meaning, more lewd references to the processes of creation, at an evening party of the self-styled intelligentsia in New York than Lincoln probably used in his whole life! And I could find no authentic record that during his days in the White House he told any such jokes, made any such references. This is a fair sample of what I did find. It is said that when he went into Stanton's office, he frequently left his hat in a chair in the reception room. In this room there always were visitors. On a certain evening Lincoln laid his stove-pipe hat as usual on a chair and on his return a very fat woman rose from the place to bow to the President. Lincoln returned the bow, then walking behind her picked up the remains of his hat and said, shaking his head sadly, "Madam, I could have told you that my hat wouldn't fit you, before you tried it on!"

His so-called sex stories would scarcely offend a nun. A. K. McClure wanted Lincoln to give Gov. Curtin a foreign mission. "But," said the President, "I'm in the position of young Sheridan when old Sheridan called him to task for his rakish conduct and said to him that he must take a wife; to which young Sheridan replied, 'Very well, father, but whose wife shall I take?' It's all very well to say that I will give Curtin a mission, but whose mission am I to take?"

Here is a story said to have shocked Horace Greeley. Secretary Stanton's private secretary returned from New York in August, 1864, with some very depressing facts as to Lincoln's chances for reëlection in the Fall. Stanton thought the President ought to hear the facts and sent his secretary to report them. Lincoln listened, walked the floor for a moment in silence, and then said "with grim earnestness of time and manner: 'Well, I can't run the political

machine. I have enough on my hands without that. It is the people's business,—the election is in their hands. If they turn their backs to the fire and get scorched in the rear, they'll find they have got to sit on the blister!"

General M. C. Meigs says that at the time Pope was defeated and Lee threatened Washington, Lincoln dropped into his office on his "weary way to see Stanton, threw himself into a big chair and with a mingled groan and sigh exclaimed: 'Chase says we can't raise any more money. Pope is licked and McClellan has the diarrhea. What shall I do? The bottom is out of the tub—'"

Then there is the "tail speech" which many estimable people felt degraded the President although he made it in Congress many years before he entered the White House. Some one in the opposition said that Lincoln's party had deserted its principles and had taken refuge under General Taylor's military coat-tail. Lincoln seized on the figure and demanded of the gentleman from Georgia if he had no acquaintance with the fact that his own party had run the last five races under the military coat-tail of General Jackson. Cried Lincoln, "Yes, sir, that coat-tail was used not only for General Jackson him-

self, but has been clung to with the grip of death by every Democratic candidate since. . . . Now, sir, you dare not give it up. Like a horde of hungry ticks you have stuck to the tail of the Hermitage lion to the end of his life: and you are still sticking to it and drawing a loathesome sustenance from it after he is dead. . . . Mr. Speaker, old horses and military coat-tails, or tails of any sort are not figures of speech such as I would be the first to introduce into discussion here but as the gentleman from Georgia has thought fit to introduce them, he and you are welcome to all you have made or can make of them. . . . If you have any more tails just cock them and come at us—"

William Stoddard, Lincoln's secretary, has a decided statement to make on this subject. He calls attention to the fact that Lincoln, the teetotaler, was constantly accused of telling dirty stories while drunk. Stoddard adds that he had been with the President, day after day, "and failed to hear any of these objectionable stories. . . . As for a vast number of the so-called jokes attributed to him, Lincoln has never so much as heard them. But one very witty and dirty and insolent pun perpetrated by him upon a member of his own Cabinet through the inventive brains

of a well-known newspaper reporter, representative of a great Northern daily, has been carried to Lincoln and the literary gentleman has been sent for. He has heretofore enjoyed special privileges of access to the President for news purposes, although his journal is a severely adverse critic. Here he is now, waiting his turn to go into the President's room, with no idea why he has been sent for. He is a jolly fellow and that joke is too good and he must tell it (to Stoddard). He does not dream that his story has been referred to the President. He did not see Lincoln's face flush and darken when the brand new pattern of foul humor was given him as being inculcated in his name. He will see something now, however, and hear something for Louis has come to summon him across the hall and he goes all smiles and chuckles. . . . He is out again. He has been in the President's room but a few moments and he is not smiling. Whatever new thing he has learned carries him out of the White House with unusual haste. . . ."

The artist, Carpenter, takes emphatic exception to statements of various biographers of Lincoln that the President told "foul stories. Mr. Lincoln, I am convinced, has been greatly wronged in this respect. Every foul-mouthed

man in the country gave currency to the slime and filth in his own imagination by attributing it to the President.—During the entire period of my stay in Washington after witnessing his intercourse with nearly all classes of men, embracing governors, senators, members of Congress, officers of the army, and intimate friends, I cannot recollect to have heard him relate a circumstance to any one of them which would have been out of place in a ladies' drawing room. Dr. Stone, his family physician, came in one day to see my studies. Sitting in front of that of the President, with whom he did not sympathize politically, he remarked with much feeling, 'It is the province of the physician to probe deeply into the interior lives of men and I affirm that Mr. Lincoln is the purest-hearted man with whom I ever came in contact.' Secretary Seward expressed the same sentiment in still stronger language."

I. N. Arnold, member of Congress from Illinois, old and intimate friend of Lincoln, also took exception to the insinuations of biographers. "I saw him constantly for many years before he went to Washington and there I saw him daily during the greater part of his presidency and although his anecdotes and stories were racy, witty

and pointed beyond all comparison with others, yet I never heard one of a character to need palliation or excuse."

John George Nicolay, John Hay, Charles Dana, Noah Brooks, all are as succinct as Arnold in cleansing Lincoln's memory of this taint. We are apt to forget that Lincoln's bitter enemies were glad to give circulation to evil reports about him. These were not all concerned with his story-telling either. Richard Dana, the author of Two Years Before the Mast, after visiting Washington and studying Lincoln, had this to say, writing to Charles Francis Adams in March, 1863:

"As to the politics of Washington, the most striking thing is the absence of personal loyalty to the President. It does not exist. He has no admirers, no enthusiastic reporters, none to bet on his head. If a Republican convention were to be held to-morrow, he would not get the vote of a State. He does not act or talk or feel like the ruler of a great empire in a great crisis. This is felt by all and has got down through all the layers of society. It has a disastrous effect on all departments and classes of officials as well as the public. He seems to me to be fonder of details than of principles, of tithing the mint, anise

and cummin of patronage, and personal questions than the weighty affairs of empire. He likes to talk and to tell stories with all sorts of persons who come to him for all sorts of purposes better than to give his mind to the noble and manly duties of his great post. It is not difficult to see that this is the feeling of the Cabinet. He has a kind of shrewdness and commonsense, no other wit, and slipshod, low-leveled honesty that made him a good Western jury lawyer. But he is an unutterable calamity to us where he is."

And Dana is mild! Greeley, Henry Winter Davis, Beecher, Bryant wrote and spoke of Lincoln with hatred. Opposition newspapers are full of astounding editorials, astounding at least to us who are in the rare position of watching the deification of a human being and who forget that Lincoln was a man and a politician. For years before he was made Secretary of War, Stanton always spoke of Lincoln as the Illinois Gorilla. One excited orator, reported in a New York paper, called the President a harlot! And Stoddard, who opened all of Lincoln's and Mrs. Lincoln's mail, says the letters "tell of partisan bitterness and personal hatred: of the most venomous malice: of low, slanderous meannesses:

of the coarsest, foulest vulgarity to which beastly men can sink: of the wildest, the fiercest, the most obscene ravings of utter insanity."

Another attribute that is rapidly becoming inseparable from Lincoln's godhood is the matter of his dress. And so sensitive is the public becoming to its own picture of Lincoln that it is scarcely safe to suggest that he ever wore, even to bed, anything save the wrinkled black frock coat and the high hat. This same public which demands and reads with avidity bawdy novels because, it says, here only is truth, demands with equal avidity that no one disturb its legendary notions about our national heroes lest truth belittle them! So, curiously, poor Lincoln must go stalking down the ages, a clown in ill-fitting black broadcloth.

As a matter of fact, his wife, who loved good clothes and wore them, saw to it that her husband when he became President was properly dressed. There is a group picture of him taken in the summer of 1860 in his yard in Springfield in which he is wearing white. A man who was fifteen when that picture was taken, who saw it taken, tells me that Lincoln was wearing a white linen suit. This same boy heard some of the Lincoln-Douglas debates and he told me that

Lincoln wore a snuff-colored, short-coated suit during one debate, again white linen, and once a white linen duster over a blue suit with brass buttons.

My grandmother, who had four sons in the Federal army, got very cross because two of her sons didn't write her and she went to Washington to see Lincoln about it. She insisted to me that he was a very well dressed man. "He wore a well-starched linen coat and pants and a plush waistcoat, of a sort of plum color."

William Russell, the famous British war correspondent, wrote in his Washington diary in 1861: "On my way to dinner at the legation, I met the President crossing Pennsylvania Avenue. He wore a suit of gray with a felt hat on the back of his head." At a farmhouse near Arlington, Russell saw Lincoln on the porch, "wearing a loose gray hunting coat with a long vest." Several diarists of the period mention the deerstalker's cap which Lincoln used to wear back and forth between the White House and the various departments, "stuffing it into the pocket of his loose, snuff-colored coat when not in use." My grandfather wrote in a letter in the winter of 1864 that he had seen Lincoln wearing a fashionably cut blue chinchilla coat and a brand-new silk hat of the latest mode with buff-colored gloves. "He looks very much the well-dressed gentleman."

That he was unhappily married is the very sine qua non of the acceptable picture of Lincoln, I suppose, simply because a tragic hero is so much bigger to the mind's eye than a happy one. A niece of the Lincolns who lived in the house with them for months on end says emphatically that this was a happy marriage; that Abraham and Mary loved each other devotedly. "Lincoln was slow, lazy and hard to get going, not a family man in the homely sense. His wife was quick, energetic, unquenchably ambitious, with a witty tongue that could cut like a two-edged sword. She was quick to speak, quick to repent."

I have met many people who knew her. They all give this description of her. Nearly all of them had experienced the warmth and generosity of her heart. She was in a continual state of urging Lincoln on, of fussing over him and at him. He needed every bit of it. But it is easy to see how this combination gave birth to the legend of his unhappiness.

An episode related by a man who knew whereof he spoke gives the lie to this most obnoxious of all the rag tags that conceal the real Lincoln. When this man was a boy he played with the Lincoln children. The boys got into the parlor one day during Mr. Lincoln's absence and upset things, as children will. When Mrs. Lincoln came home, she was very cross and scolded them heartily. Lincoln came in and interfered on the boys' behalf. Instantly, Mrs. Lincoln turned on her husband. "But he laughed, picked her up in his arms and kissed the daylights out of her. And she clung to him like a girl."

If only one of his contemporaries had been big enough to give us the full, rounded man as finely as Nicolay and Hay, two of his secretaries gave us the president! Then these bits of trash could not have clung to his real greatness. I say his real greatness as though I knew in what that consisted. But I do not know. Nor does any one else. Numerous admirably expressed biographies have been written about Lincoln. Innumerable statues have been chiseled, countless portraits painted, all attempting to attach him to us by homely facts before we thrust him from us forever to a place among the gods on high Olympus. Yet for all these, none of us knows Abraham Lincoln. The portraiture of him was begun too late.

I gaze and gaze at my own mosaic of him. It

is not he. I go to Washington and stand in awe before the Lincoln Memorial, that embodiment of the world's ideal of beauty. It is not Lincoln. I go to Springfield and wander through the little house where he begot his children and ate his meals and was adjusted to Mary and she to him. Not even his ghost is left. I go to the cemetery and stand in the May sunshine, staring into his tomb. He has gone.—And yet in Springfield the very winds murmur his name, the birds chant of him, the folk themselves are indelibly etched with something reminiscent of his pattern. . . .

Struggling to express him, I am divided from him by the not-to-be-crossed void that separates the great soul from understanding by the common mind. And in comparison with Lincoln all of us who are writing of him or modeling or painting him are common.

He was so near and clear to me, eight years ago when I talked glibly of him to my father—talked so much and knew so little! Now that I have touched the hem of his mental and spiritual mantle, he looms too high for my glance to compass. And yet, during the years of seeking, so vital a hold has he taken on my being that I cannot force myself to write of his assassination. I can no longer read without breaking down the

## SOME POPULAR FALLACIES

lines in the English tongue that seem to me to come nearest to phrasing our feeling for him, which begin:

"When lilacs last in the dooryard bloom'd

And the great star early dropped in the Western sky
in the night,

I mourned, and yet shall mourn with ever-returning spring-"

and march on with their heart-shattering music to the ending. Nor can I read without an aching throat Lincoln's one adequate epitaph, also written by Whitman:

"This dust was once the man,
Gentle, plain, just and resolute,
under whose cautious hand,
Against the foulest crime in history
known in any land or age,
Was saved the Union of these States."



## Date Due Demco 293-5

923,173 L738<sub>m</sub> 17660



